Encounter

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Alasdair MacIntyre
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McCarthy Murdoch & Spark

Robert Lekachman
J. M. Keynes

Lord Gladwyn
Cross Channel

W. H. Auden
The Cave of Nakedness

edited by
Stephen Spender & Melvin J. Lasky

December 1963
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Go well–go Shell

SHELL

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Encounter

Edited by STEPHEN SPENDER *and* MELVIN J. LASKY

DECEMBER 1963 VOL. XXI NO. 6

ASSISTANT EDITORS: *Margot Walmsley, John Mander, John Gross.* CIRCULATION & ADVERTISING: *John Hall*
Published monthly at 25 Haymarket London SW1. 4s. a copy (USA & Canada 75c. India Rs.1.50). Postage: 6d.
Annual subscription (inc. postage): 50s.: USA & Canada $8.50: India Rs.18. Six months: 27s.: $4.50: Rs.11.
Subscription & Trade department: Rolls House Publishing Co. Ltd. Breams Buildings London EC4 (Holborn 5708).
US & Canadian subscriptions may be entered with British Publications Inc. 30 East 60th Street New York 22
US newsstand distribution by Gordon & Gotch (USA) Inc. 415 Madison Ave. (8th Floor) New York 17 (Plaza 5–5133).
Second-class mail privileges authorised at the Post Office New York N.Y. *© 1963 by Encounter Ltd.*

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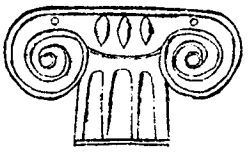

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Ingeborg Bachmann

Among Murderers & Madmen

MEN ARE ON THE WAY to themselves when they get together in the evening, drink and talk and express opinions. When they talk without purpose they are on their own tracks, when they express opinions and their opinions rise with the smoke from pipes, cigarettes and cigars and when the world turns to smoke and madness in the village inns, in the private rooms, and back rooms of the big restaurants and in the wine cellars of the big cities.

We are in Vienna, more than ten years after the war. *"Nach dem Krieg"*—this is how we reckon time. We are in Vienna in the evening and swarming out into the cafés and restaurants. We come straight from editorial offices and office blocks, from surgeries and studios, and meet, get on the trail, hunt the best that we have lost, like a deer, with embarrassment and to the accompaniment of laughter. In the intervals, when nobody thinks of a joke or of a story that must definitely be told, when nobody assails the silence and everyone sinks into himself, someone now and then hears the blue deer lament—once more, still.

In the evening I went with Mahler to our men's circle at the *Kronenkeller* in the Inner Town. Everywhere, now that it was evening in the world, the taverns were full, and the men talked and expressed opinions and told stories like the wanderers and martyrs, like the Titans and demigods of history and fable; they rode up into the night land, settled down by the fire, the common open fire which they poked, in the night and the desert in which they were. They had forgotten their jobs and families. None of them wanted to recall that at home their wives were now turning back the covers and going to bed because they didn't know what to do with the night. Barefoot or in slippers, with tied-up hair and tired faces, the women wandered round at home, turned off the gas and looked fearfully under the bed and in the cupboard, soothed the children with absent-minded words or sat dejectedly by the radio and then went to bed after all with thoughts of vengeance in the lonely house. The women lay there feeling like victims, with wide-open eyes in the darkness, full of despair and malice. They did accounts with marriage, the years and the housekeeping money, manipulated, forged and embezzled. Finally they shut their eyes, attached themselves to a waking dream, abandoned themselves to wild deluding thoughts, until they fell asleep in one last great reproach. And in the first dream they murdered their husbands, made them die in car crashes, of heart attacks and pneumonia; made them die quickly, or slowly and miserably, according to the magnitude of the reproach, and under their closed delicate eyelids tears welled up in sorrow for the death of their husbands. They were crying over their husbands who had gone out, ridden out, never came home, and finally

INGEBORG BACHMANN *is one of Austria's best-known younger poets. This story was translated from the German by Michael Bullock.*

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they wept over themselves. They had come to their truest tears.

But we were far away, the club, the choral society, the school friends, the league members, groups, unions, the symposium and the men's circle. We ordered our wine, put our tobacco pouches on the table in front of us, and were out of range of their vengeance and their tears. We didn't die but grew livelier, rattled on and put forward our opinions. Not till much later, towards morning, would we stroke the women's wet faces in the dark and offend them again with our breath, the sour, strong fumes of wine and beer, or earnestly hope that they were already asleep and that we should not have to utter another word in the bedroom-tomb, our prison, to which we returned each time exhausted and peaceable, as though we had given our word of honour.

We were far away. We were together that evening as on every Friday: Haderer, Bertoni, Hutter, Ranitzky, Friedl, Mahler and I. No, Herz was missing, he was in London that week preparing for his final return to Vienna. Steckel was also missing, he was ill again. Mahler said, "There are only three of us Jews here this evening" and he looked fixedly at Friedl and me.

Friedl stared at him uncomprehendingly with his little round watery eyes and pressed his hands together, no doubt because he thought that he wasn't a Jew at all, and nor was Mahler, his father perhaps, his grandfather—Friedl didn't know exactly. But Mahler put on his arrogant face. You'll see, said his face. And it said: I never make mistakes.

It was black Friday. Haderer was talking big. That is to say, the wanderer and martyr in him was silent and the Titan was having his say, so that he no longer had to belittle himself and boast of the blows he had received, but could boast of those he had given. On this Friday conversation took a different turn, perhaps because Herz and Steckel were missing and because Friedl, Mahler and I didn't seem an obstacle to anyone; but perhaps it was only because the conversation had to become true some time or other, because smoke and madness allow everything to find utterance.

Now the night was a battlefield, a campaign, an alert, and they revelled in that night. Haderer and Hutter plunged into the memory of the war, they wallowed in reminiscences, in a lot of obscure talk; and neither of them would let up until they were transformed and wore uniforms again, until they were at the spot where they were both in command again, both officers, and had established contact with headquarters; where they had flown over with a *"Ju 52"* to Voronezh, but then suddenly they couldn't agree on what they should have thought of General Manstein in the winter of 1942, and they simply couldn't agree on whether the 6th Army could have been relieved or not, whether the plan of deployment itself was to blame or not; then they landed retrospectively on Crete, but in Paris, a little French girl had told Hutter she preferred the Austrians to the Germans, and when day broke in Norway and when the partisans had encircled them in Serbia they had come to the point—they ordered the second litre of wine, and we also ordered another one, because Mahler had started telling us about some intrigues in the Medical Association.

We drank Burgenland wine and Gumpoldskirchen wine. We drank in Vienna and the night was not yet over for us by a long way.

On this evening, when the partisans had already won Haderer's esteem and had only incidentally been harshly condemned by him (because it never became quite clear what Haderer really thought about this and other things, and Mahler's face said to me once again: I never make mistakes!), when the dead Slovenian nuns were lying naked in the wood outside Veldes and Haderer, put off his stroke by Mahler's silence, had to drop the nuns and stopped in the middle of his story, an old man whom we had long known came up to our table. He was a wandering, dirty, dwarfish

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fellow with a drawing-pad who bothered the customers with offers to draw them for a few shillings. We didn't want to be disturbed and certainly not drawn, but because of the embarrassed silence Haderer unexpectedly and magnanimously invited the old man to draw us, to show us what he could do. We each took a few shillings out of our purse, put them in a pile and pushed the money across to him. But he took no notice of the money. He stood there happily supporting the pad on his bent left forearm with his head thrown back. His thick pencil darted about the pad at such a speed that we burst out laughing. His movements looked as though they came from a silent film, grotesque, shot too fast. As I was sitting nearest to him he handed the first sheet to me with a bow.

He had drawn Haderer:

With duelling scars in his small face. With the skin stretched too tight over his skull. Grimacing, continually acting the expression on his face. His hair meticulously parted. A gaze that tried to be piercing, compelling, and wasn't quite.

Haderer was a head of department on the radio and wrote over-long dramas which all the major theatres regularly produced at a loss and which gained the unqualified approval of all the critics. We all had them at home, volume by volume, with a handwritten dedication. *"To my esteemed friend . . ."* We were all his esteemed friends—apart from Friedl and me, because we were too young and hence could only be "dear friends" or "dear, young, gifted friends." He never accepted a manuscript from Friedl or me for broadcasting, but he gave us recommendations to other editors and publishers, felt himself to be our patron and the patron of some twenty other young people without there being any visible sign of what this patronage consisted in or what results it produced. Naturally it wasn't his fault that he had to console us and at the same time spur us on with compliments; it was the fault of "that gang of daylight robbers," as he called them, of the senile authorities in the ministries, the education offices, and the radio; he drew the highest possible salary among such authorities and at measured intervals received all the honours, prizes and even medals that country and city had to bestow; he delivered speeches on great occasions, was regarded as a man suitable for making public appearances and yet at the same time as one of the most outspoken and independent spirits. He swore at everyone, that is to say he always swore at the other side, so that at one time one side was pleased and at another time the other, because now the one was the other. To be more exact, he simply called things by their names, but fortunately he rarely did the same with people, so that no one in particular felt attacked.

Sketched like this by the beggar-artist he looked like a malicious death's head or like one of those masks that actors still sometimes fashion for themselves in playing the parts of Mephistopheles or Iago.

I hesitantly handed the sheet of paper on. When it reached Haderer I watched him closely and had to admit to myself that I was surprised. Not for a moment did he appear hurt or offended, he showed his superiority, he clapped, perhaps three times too often—but he always clapped and praised too often—and cried "Bravo" several times. With this "Bravo" he also expressed the fact that he alone here was the great man entitled to bestow praise, and the old man reverently bowed his head, but he hardly looked up because he was in a hurry to complete Bertoni's head.

BERTONI was drawn like this:

With his handsome athlete's face which one could guess to be sun-tanned. With his sanctimonious eyes that wiped out the impression of radiant health. With his cupped hand over his mouth, as though he were afraid of saying something too loud, as though he might let slip a thoughtless word.

Bertoni worked on the *Tagblatt*. For years he had been ashamed of the continual lowering of the standard of his *feuilleton*, and now he merely smiled sorrowfully when

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someone drew his attention to a slip, inaccuracies, the lack of good contributions or correct information. What do you expect —in these days! his smile seemed to say. He couldn't halt the decline on his own, although he knew what a good newspaper ought to look like, oh yes, he knew that, had known it early in his career, that was why he liked to talk about the old newspapers, about the great days of the Vienna Press and how he had worked under its legendary kings in the old days and learnt from them. He knew all the stories, all the scandals of twenty years ago, he was at home only in that time and he could bring this time to life, could talk about it without a break. He also liked to talk about the dismissal era that followed, how he and a few other journalists had got by during the first years after 1938, what they had secretly thought and said and hinted, in what danger they had been before they too put on uniform, and now he still sat there wearing his cap of invisibility, smiled, could still not get over a great many things. He formed his sentences carefully. No one knew what he thought, hinting had become second nature, he behaved as though the Gestapo were always listening. The Gestapo had given birth to an everlasting police force before which Bertoni had to cringe. Even Steckel couldn't give him back a feeling of security. He had known Steckel intimately before he had to emigrate, had become Steckel's best friend again, not only because soon after 1945 Steckel had vouched for him and got him back on to the *Tagblatt*, but because in many respects they could reach better understanding with each other than with the rest of us, particularly when "those days" were under discussion. At such times they spoke a language which Bertoni must have imitated at some early period, and now he no longer had any other and was glad to be able to talk it with someone again—a light, evanescent, witty language that didn't really go with his appearance and behaviour, a language of innuendoes that had a double appeal to him now. He didn't hint at things, like Steckel, in order to make a matter clear, but hinted past them into a despairing vagueness.

The draughtsman had put the sheet down in front of me again. Mahler leant over, glanced at it and laughed arrogantly. I passed it on with a smile. Bertoni didn't say "Bravo" because Haderer had got in first and deprived him of the chance of expressing himself. He merely looked at the drawing of himself sorrowfully and thoughtfully. After Haderer had quietened down, Mahler said across the table to Bertoni: "You're a handsome man. Did you know that?"

AND THIS WAS HOW the old man saw Ranitzky:

With a hasty face, the face of a man eager to please, who would nod before anyone expected agreement. Even his ears and his eyelids were nodding in the drawing.

Ranitzky, one could be sure of that, had always agreed. Everyone fell silent when Ranitzky, with a word, touched on the past, for there was no point in being frank with Ranitzky. It was better to forget that and to forget him; when he sat at the table he was tolerated in silence. Sometimes he nodded to himself, forgotten by everyone. He had been two years without a job after 1945 and perhaps even under arrest, but now he was a professor at the university again. He had re-written all the pages in his *"Geschichte Österreichs"* dealing with recent history and republished it. When I once tried to question Mahler about Ranitzky, Mahler said to me briefly: "Everyone knows that he did it out of opportunism and is incorrigible; he knows it himself. That's why nobody tells him. But one ought to tell him all the same." Mahler, in any case, told him by his expression every time they met or when he answered him or merely said, "Listen. . . ." and made Ranitzky's eyelids start fluttering. Yes, he set him trembling every time he greeted him with a shallow, fleeting handshake. Then Mahler was at his cruellest, when he said nothing or merely straightened his tie, looked at somebody and indicated at the same time that he remembered everything. He had the memory of a merciless

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angel, he remembered all the time; he simply had a memory, no hatred, but just this inhuman ability to store everything up and to let one know that he knew.

HUTTER, finally, was drawn like this:

Like Barabbas, if it had appeared natural to Barabbas that he should be set free. With childish confidence and triumph in his round, sly face.

Hutter was a man who had been set free and felt no shame, no scruples. Everyone liked him, even I, perhaps even Mahler. We had gone so far with the times that we kept saying, Let this man go free! Hutter succeeded in everything, he even succeeded in not having his success held against him. He was a provider of capital and financed everything possible, a film company, newspapers, magazines and recently a committee to "save Western civilisation" for which Haderer had gained his support. He sat every evening with other people at a table in town, with the theatre directors and the actors, with businessmen and highgrade civil servants. He published books but he never read a book, as he never saw any of the films that he financed; nor did he ever go to the theatre, but he came to the theatre tables afterwards. For he honestly loved the world in which all this was discussed and in which things were prepared. He loved the world of preparations, of opinions about everything, of calculations, intrigues, risks, shuffling and joined in when their cards got worse, intervened or watched as the trumps were played and intervened again. He enjoyed everything, and he enjoyed his friends, the old and the new, the weak and the strong. He laughed where Ranitzky smiled (Ranitzky smiled his way through and generally smiled only when somebody was being murdered by the circle, an absent person whom he would have to meet next day, but he smiled so subtly and ambivalently that he could tell himself he didn't join in, he only smiled, said nothing and thought his own thoughts). Hutter laughed loudly when somebody was being murdered and he was even capable, without thinking anything of it, of repeating what was said. Or he would get furious and defend the absent person, refuse to let him be murdered, drive the others off, save the man who was in danger and then immediately roll up his sleeves and take part in the next, if he felt like it. He was spontaneous, really able to get excited, and all reflection, consideration, was alien to him.

Haderer's enthusiasm over the draughtsman now abated, he wanted to get back into the conversation, and when Mahler forbade the old man to draw him he was grateful and waved the man away, whereupon he pocketed his money and bowed once more to the great man, whom he must have recognised.

I HAD CONFIDENTLY HOPED that the conversation would come round to the next elections or to the vacant post of theatre director, which had provided us with a topic for three Fridays already. But this Friday everything was different, the others wouldn't stop talking about the war they had been drawn into, none of them escaped the suction, they gurgled in the morass, grew noisier and noisier and made it impossible for us to start a different conversation at our end of the table. We were forced to listen and to stare into space, to crumble the bread on the table, and every now and then I exchanged a glance with Mahler who slowly expelled the smoke of his cigarette from his mouth, blew rings and seemed to be entirely given over to this smoke game. He held his head slightly tilted back and loosened his tie.

"Through the war, through this experience, we have come closer to the enemy," I now heard Haderer say.

"Who?" Friedl made a stuttering attempt to enter the conversation. "The Bolivians?" Haderer hesitated, he didn't know what Friedl meant, and I tried to remember whether they had also been at war with Bolivia at the time. Mahler laughed soundlessly, it looked as though he were trying to draw the smoke rings back into his mouth.

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Bertoni explained quickly: "The British, Americans, French."

Haderer had recovered his self-possession and interrupted him vehemently: "But I never looked upon them as enemies! I'm simply talking about the experiences. I wasn't referring to anything else. We can speak and write differently because we have them. Just think of the neutrals, who lack these bitter experiences and who have lacked them for a long time." He put his hand over his eyes. "I'm glad not to have missed anything, not to have missed those years, those experiences."

Friedl said like an obstinate schoolboy, but much too quietly: "I'd have been glad to miss them."

Haderer looked at him non-committally; he didn't show that he was angry but tried to hand out a sermon that would please everybody. But at this moment Hutter put his elbows on the table and asked so loudly that he completely disconcerted Haderer: "Yes, what about that? Couldn't one say that culture is only possible through war, struggle, tension . . . experiences—I mean culture, what about that?"

HADERER MADE A brief pause, first warned Hutter, then reproved Friedl and then, surprisingly, spoke of the First World War in order to evade the second. They talked about the Battle of the Isonzo; Haderer and Ranitzky exchanged regimental reminiscences and thundered against the Italians—first against the Italians as enemies and then against the Italians as allies in the last war; they talked about "being stabbed in the back," about "unreliable leaders," but preferred to return to the Isonzo and finally lay in the barrage on the *Kleiner Pal*. Bertoni took advantage of the moment when Haderer thirstily put his glass to his mouth and began implacably to tell an incredible and involved story from the Second World War. It concerned the order given to himself and a German philologist in France to organise a brothel; there was no end to the misadventures that beset them, and Bertoni became involved in the most comical debaucheries. Even Friedl suddenly shook with laughter, I was surprised, and still more surprised when he suddenly tried to appear familiar with the operations, ranks, dates. For Friedl was the same age as myself and at most, like me, had entered the army during the last year of the war, straight from school. But then I saw that Friedl was drunk and I knew that he became difficult when he was drunk, that he was joining in the conversation only to make fun of it and out of desperation, and now I could hear the mockery in his words. But for a moment I had distrusted him too, because he had gone back to the others, had entered into this world of tomfoolery, tests of courage, heroism, obedience and disobedience, that man's world in which everything that normally held good was remote, everything that held good for us during the day, a world in which no one knew any more what he could boast of and what he felt ashamed of and whether anything in this world in which we were citizens still corresponded to this boast and this shame. And I thought of Bertoni's story about stealing pigs in Russia, but I knew that Bertoni was incapable of so much as pocketing a pencil in the newspaper office, he was so correct. Or Haderer, for example, who had received the highest decorations during the first war and people still say was entrusted by Hötzendorf with a mission calling for great boldness. But Haderer, when one looked at him here, was a man who was not capable of any boldness whatever and never could have been, at least not in this world. Perhaps he had been capable of it in the other world, under another law. And Mahler, who is cold-blooded and the most fearless man I know, told me that back there in 1914 or 1915, as a young man with the medical corps, he had fainted and taken morphia in order to be able to stand the work in a military hospital. Then he had made two suicide attempts and been in a mental hospital till the end of the war. So all of them operated in two worlds and were different in the two worlds, divided and never united egos which were never allowed

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to meet. They were all drunk now and swaggering and had to pass through the purgatory in which their unredeemed egos were screaming, wishing soon to be replaced by their civilian egos, the loving social egos that had wives and jobs, rivalries and needs of all kinds. And they hunted the blue deer which early on had emerged from their one ego and never come back, and so long as it did not come back the world remained a madness. Friedl jogged me, he was trying to stand up, and I was startled when I saw his gleaming, swollen face. I went out with him. We twice looked for the washroom in the wrong direction. In the passage we pushed our way through a group of men who were crowding into the large hall in the cellar. I had never seen such a crush in the *Kronenkeller* nor had I ever seen these faces here. It was so striking that I asked a waiter what was going on this evening. He didn't know any details, but he said it was an "Old Comrades Reunion," they didn't generally let the rooms for such gatherings, but Colonel von Winkler, I must have heard of him, the famous one, would be coming to celebrate with them; he thought it was a gathering in memory of Narvik.

IN THE WASHROOM there was a deathly silence. Friedl leaned on the washbasin, reached for the roller towel and spun it round once.

"Can you understand," he asked, "why we sit together?'

I said nothing and shrugged my shoulders.

"You do understand what I mean?" Friedl said insistently.

"Yes, yes," I said.

But Friedl went on: "Do you understand why even Herz and Ranitzky sit together, why Herz doesn't hate him as he hates Langer, who is perhaps less guilty and is dead to-day? Ranitzky isn't dead. Why in God's name do we sit together! Herz especially I don't understand. They killed his wife, his mother. . . ."

I thought about it hard and then I said, "Yes, I do understand it."

Friedl said, "Because he has forgotten? Or because, after a certain day, he wants it to be buried?"

"No," I said, "that isn't it. It has nothing to do with forgetting. Nor with forgiving. It has nothing to do with all that."

Friedl said, "But Herz helped Ranitzky to get on his feet again, and for at least three years now they've been sitting together, and he sits with Hutter and Haderer. He knows all about them."

I said, "We know too. And what do we do?"

Friedl said more vehemently, as if something had occurred to him: "Do you think Ranitzky hates Herz for having helped him? What do you think? He probably hates him for that too."

I said, "No, I don't think so. He thinks that's how it should be, and at most he fears that there is something behind it, and there is something more to come. He feels unsure of himself. Others like Hutter, don't ask many questions and find it quite natural that times pass and times change."

IN THOSE DAYS, after '45, I too thought that the world was divided, and forever, into good and evil, but now the world is already dividing again, and again differently. It was almost impossible to take in, it all happened so imperceptibly, now we are mixed together again so that a fresh division can be made, once more we have the minds and the deeds that have sprung from other minds, other deeds. Do you understand? It has come to that, even if we don't want to see it. But even that isn't the whole reason for this wretched agreement.

Friedl cried out, "Well, what is it then? What's the reason for it? Go on, say something! Is it perhaps that we are all the same anyhow and that's why we're together?"

"No," I said, "we're not the same. Mahler was never like the others and I hope we shall never be like them either."

Friedl stared into space. "Yes, but Mahler and you and I are also very different from one another, each of us wants and thinks different things. Even the others aren't alike, Haderer and Ranitzky are very different, Ranitzky

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would certainly like to see his *Reich* return again, but definitely not Haderer, he has backed democracy and this time he will stick to it, I feel certain of this. Ranitzky is hateful, and so is Haderer, he remains hateful in my eyes in spite of everything, but they are not the same, and there is a difference if one sits at a table with one of the two or with both of them. And Bertoni. . . ."

As Friedl yelled his name, Bertoni came in and turned red under his tan. He vanished behind a door and we remained silent for a while. I washed my hands and face.

Friedl whispered, "Then everyone is in league with everyone, and I am too, but I don't want to be! And you are also in league!"

I said, "We're not in league, there is no league. It's much worse. I think we all have to live together and can't live together. In every brain there is a world and a demand that excludes every other world, every other demand. But we all need one another, if anything is ever to become good and whole."

Friedl laughed maliciously. "Need. Of course, that's it; perhaps I even need Haderer. . . ."

I said, "That isn't how I meant it."

Friedl said, "But why not? I shall need him; it's easy for you to talk in general terms, you haven't got a wife and three children. And if you don't need Haderer you may one day need somebody who is no better."

I didn't answer.

"I've got three children," he yelled, and then he showed me, by moving his hand to and fro eighteen inches above the floor, how small his children were.

"Stop it," I said. "That's no argument. We can't talk like that."

Friedl grew angry. "Yes, it is an argument, you have no idea what a powerful argument it is, for almost everything. I married at twenty-two. What can I do about it? You have no idea what it means, no idea at all!"

He screwed up his face and supported himself with all his strength on the washbasin. I thought he was going to sink to the ground. Bertoni came out again, didn't even wash his hands and quickly left the room, as if afraid of hearing his name again, and more than his name.

Friedl swayed and said, "You don't like Herz? Am I right?"

I replied reluctantly, "What makes you think that? . . . All right then, I don't like him. Because I reproach him with sitting down with those people. Because I keep reproaching him with it. Because he helps to prevent us from being able to sit with him and a few others at a different table. He sees to it that we all sit at one table."

Friedl: "You're crazy, even crazier than I am. First you say we need one another and now you reproach Herz for that. I don't reproach him for it. He has the right to be friendly with Ranitzky."

I said excitedly, "No, he hasn't. No one has the right. Neither he nor anyone else."

"Yes," said Friedl, "after the war we thought the world was divided forever into good and evil. But I'll tell you what the world looks like when it is divided cleanly.

"It was when I came to London and met Herz's brother. It took my breath away. He knew nothing about me but he wasn't even satisfied by the fact that I was so young, he asked me straight away: Where were you in those days and what did you do? I told him I was at school and that my elder brother had been shot as a deserter; I also told him that in the end I had to take part, like all the pupils in my form. After that he asked no more questions, but he began to enquire about various people he had known, including Haderer and Bertoni, about a lot of people. I tried to tell him what I knew, and it came out that some of them were sorry about what had happened, that some felt embarrassed—yes, it was impossible to say more with the best will in the world—and others were dead, and most of them denied and covered up; I said that too. Haderer will always deny, always falsify his past, won't he? But then I noticed that this man was no longer listening to me at all, he was completely absorbed by one thought. And when I began to talk about the differences again

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and said for the sake of justice that perhaps Bertoni had never done anything bad in those days and at most had been a coward, he interrupted me and said: "No, don't make any distinctions. For me there is no difference and never will be. I shall never set foot in that country again. I shall never walk among murderers."

"I can understand that, in fact I understand him better than Herz. Although—" I said slowly, "that's no solution either, only for a while, only so long as the worst remained at its worst. One is not a victim for a lifetime. That's no solution."

"It seems to me that there is no solution whatever in this world. We grapple with life and aren't even capable of clarifying this dismal little situation for ourselves, and before us others have grappled with it, have been unable to clarify anything and have run to their doom. They were victims or executioners, and the deeper one descends into time the more impassable it becomes, I often feel completely lost in history, don't know where I can hang my heart, on which parties, groups, forces, for everything seems to obey an infamous law. And all one can do is to be on the side of the victims, but that leads nowhere, they don't show us any way."

"That's the terrible thing about it," yelled Friedl. "The victims, the many, many victims don't show us any way at all. And for the murderers times change. The victims are the victims. That's all. My father was a victim of the Dollfuss period, my grandfather a victim of the Monarchy, my brothers victims of Hitler, but that is no help to me, do you understand what I mean? They simply fell down, were run over, were shot, stood against the wall, ordinary people who don't think much or have many opinions. Well yes, two or three of them thought a bit, my grandfather thought of the coming Republic, but tell me, what was the use? Couldn't it have come without that death? And my father thought of social democracy, but tell me who can claim his death?—not our *Arbeiter partei* that wants to win the elections. It doesn't need a death for that. Not for that. Jews were murdered because they were Jews, they were nothing but victims, so many victims—but surely not so that to-day we should at last tell our children that they are human beings? It's a bit late, don't you think? No, that is something no one understands, that the victims serve no purpose. That is just what nobody understands and that is also why no one feels it an insult that these victims should also have to suffer so that we shall come to realise certain things. These realisations aren't needed at all. Who here doesn't know that one should not kill? That's been known for two thousand years. Is it worth wasting another word over that? Oh, but there is plenty of talk about it in Haderer's last speech, there it has just been discovered, he twists and twines humanity round in his mouth, he quotes the classics, quotes the Church Fathers and the latest metaphysical platitudes. But that's crazy. How can anyone make a speech about that? It's completely insane or malicious. Who are we that people should have to say such things to us?"

And he began again: "Let someone tell me why we sit here together. Let someone tell me that and I'll listen. Because it is unparalleled, and what comes out of it will also be unparalleled."

I DON'T UNDERSTAND this world any more—we often used to say that to one another during the nights in which we drank and talked and stated our beliefs. But everyone had moments when it seemed that it could be understood. I told Friedl I understood everything and he was wrong not to understand anything. But then all at once I didn't understand anything any more either, and now I thought to myself that I couldn't even live with him, and of course still less with the others. One couldn't possibly live in one world with a man like Friedl, with whom one was in agreement over many things but for whom a family was an argument, or with Steckel for whom art was an argument. There were times when I couldn't even live in one world with Mahler, whom I liked best of all. Did I know

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whether, at my next decision, he would come to the same one? "Looking back" we were in agreement, but what about the future? Perhaps I should soon be separated from him and Friedl—we could only hope not to be separated after all.

Friedl whimpered, straightened up, and reeled to the nearest lavatory door. I heard him vomiting, gargling and rattling in the throat, and in between he said, "If all that would just come out, if one could spew it all out, all of it, all of it!"

When he came out he beamed at me with a contorted face and said, "Soon I shall drink brotherhood with that lot in there, perhaps even with Ranitzky. I shall say. . . ."

I held his face under the tap, dried it, then I seized his arm. "You won't say anything." We had already been away too long and had to get back to the table. As we passed the big hall the men of the "Old Comrades Reunion" were making such a din that I didn't catch a word of what Friedl was saying. He was looking better again. I believe we were laughing about something, about ourselves probably, as we pushed open the door of the private room.

THE AIR IN THE ROOM was even thicker and we could barely see across to the table. When we came closer and passed through the smoke and discarded our madness, I saw a man sitting next to Mahler whom I didn't know. These two were silent and the others were talking. As Friedl and I sat down again and Bertoni gave us a hazy look, the stranger stood up and shook hands with us, murmuring a name. There was not the least friendliness in him, absolutely nothing approachable, his eyes were cold and dead, and I looked questioningly at Mahler, who must have known him. He was a very tall man in his early thirties, although he looked older at first glance. He wasn't badly dressed, but it looked as though someone had given him a suit that was a little bigger than even his size demanded. It was some time before I was able to catch snatches of the conversation, in which neither Mahler nor the stranger took any part.

Haderer to Hutter: "But then you must also know General Zwirl."

Hutter delightedly to Haderer: "But of course. From Graz."

Haderer: "A highly educated man. One of the finest Greek scholars. A very dear old friend of mine."

Now there was reason to fear that Haderer would reproach Friedl and me with our insufficient knowledge of Greek and Latin, ignoring the fact that it was people like him who had prevented us from acquiring this knowledge at the proper time. But I was not in the mood to discuss one of Haderer's favourite subjects or even to challenge him, instead I leant over to Mahler as though I hadn't heard anything. Mahler was saying something in a low voice to the stranger and the latter was answering loudly, staring straight in front of him. He answered each question with one single sentence. I guessed that he must be a patient of Mahler's or at least a friend who was treated by him. Mahler always knew all kinds of people and enjoyed friendships which we knew nothing about. In one hand the man held a packet of cigarettes, with the other he smoked as I had never seen anyone smoke before. He smoked mechanically, drawing on the cigarette at absolutely regular intervals, as though smoking were the only thing he could do. From the stub of the cigarette, a very short stub on which he burnt himself without wincing, he lit the next one and smoked on for all he was worth.

Suddenly he stopped smoking, held the cigarette trembling in his huge, ugly red hands, and nodded his head. Now I heard it too. Although the doors were shut a bellowed song echoed across to us from the hall on the other side of the passage. It sounded like "*In der Heimat, in der Heimat,* we'll meet again. . . ."

He drew hastily on his cigarette and said loudly to us, in the same voice in which he had answered Mahler's questions:

"They're always coming back home. I suppose they haven't quite got there yet."

Haderer laughed and said: "I don't know what you mean exactly, but that really is

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an incredible disturbance and my esteemed friend Colonel von Winkler could have kept his men a bit quieter.... If things go on like that we shall have to look round for other accommodation."

Bertoni interjected that the had already spoken to the landlord, who had said that his "Old Comrades Reunion" was an exceptional occasion, some big anniversary. He didn't know exactly....

Haderer said he didn't know exactly either, but his esteemed friend and former comrade....

I HAD MISSED what the stranger, who had continued speaking while Haderer and Bertoni drowned his voice, had said to us—Friedl must have been the only one who listened to him—so it wasn't clear to me why he suddenly said that he was a murderer.

"...I was under twenty when I knew it for a fact," he said, like somebody who isn't telling his story for the first time, but can talk about nothing else wherever he goes and doesn't need any particular listener but is quite content with any he can find. "I was predestined to become a murderer as some people are predestined to become heroes or saints or average men. I lacked nothing to that end, no characteristic, if you like to put it that way, and everything drove me to one goal: to murder. All I lacked was a victim. At that time I used to run through the street, here"—he pointed in front of him through the smoke, and Friedl quickly leant back to avoid being touched by the hand—"here I ran through the alleyways, the chestnut blossoms gave off their scent, the air was always full of chestnut blossoms in the Ring-Strasse and in the narrow alleyways, and my heart was dislocated, my lungs were pumping wildly, and my breath came out of me like the breath of a hunting wolf. Only I didn't know yet how to kill and whom to kill. I had only my hands, but would they suffice to strangle a throat? I was much weaker in those days and undernourished. I knew nobody I could have hated, I was alone in the city, and so I didn't find the victim and went almost insane over it in the night. It was always at night that I had to get up and go downstairs and out, and stand at the windy, deserted, dark street corners and wait. The streets were so quiet in those days, no one passed, no one spoke to me, and I waited till I began to shiver and whimper with weakness and my madness faded away. That only lasted a short time. Then I was put in the army. When I was given a gun I knew that I was lost. One day I should shoot. I handed over responsibility for myself to this gun barrel, I loaded it with bullets, which I had invented just as I had invented gunpowder, that was certain. At rifle practice I always missed the target, not because I couldn't aim straight but because I knew that the bull's-eye wasn't a real eye, that it was only a substitute, a practice target that produced no death. It irritated me, it was only a deceptive bait, not reality. I shot, if you like to put it that way, accurately off-target. I used to sweat terribly during these rifle practices, afterwards I often went blue in the face, vomited, and had to lie down. I was either insane or a murderer, I knew that for sure, and with a last residue of resistance to this fate I talked about it to the others, so that they might protect me, so that they might be protected from me and know whom they were dealing with. But the peasant boys, artisans, and clerks who were in my room thought nothing of it. They pitied me or ridiculed me, but they didn't take me for a murderer. Or did they? I don't know. One of them used to call me 'Jack the Ripper,' a post-office clerk who went to the cinema a lot and read books, a clever fellow; but I don't think he really believed it either."

THE STRANGER STUBBED OUT his cigarette, looked quickly down and then up, I felt his cold, prolonged gaze on me and didn't know why I wanted to sustain this gaze. I did sustain it, but it lasted longer than the gaze exchanged by lovers and enemies, it lasted till I could no longer think and was so empty that I jumped when I heard the loud, regular voice again.

"We came to Italy, to Monte Cassino. That was the greatest slaughterhouse you

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can imagine. There flesh was so mangled you might think it was a delight to be a murderer. But it wasn't, although by then I was quite certain that I was one and for six months had been going round in public with a gun. By the time I came into the position on Monte Cassino I hadn't a vestige of soul left in me. I breathed the smell of corpses, the smell of burning and dug-outs like the freshest mountain air. I didn't feel the others' fear. I could have had a big day with my first murder. For what was simply a battlefield to the others was to me a murderfield. But I'll tell you what happened. I never fired my rifle. I levelled it for the first time when we had a group of Poles in front of us; there were troops from every country in action at Monte Cassino. Then I said to myself: No, not Poles. I didn't like the names the others gave people in their slang talk—*Polacks, Yanks, Niggers*. So no Americans, no Poles. I was just a simple murderer, I had no excuse, and my language was clear, not flowery like the others. 'Wipe out,' 'rub out,' 'smoke out,' such expressions were unthinkable to me, they revolted me, I couldn't utter them. My language was clear, I said to myself: You must and you want to murder a human being. Yes, that was what I wanted and I had wanted it for a long time, for exactly a year I had feverishly desired it. A human being! I couldn't fire, you must see that. I don't know if I can explain it to you fully. It was easy for the others, they did as they were told, they generally didn't know if they had hit anybody or how many, nor did they want to know. Those men weren't murderers, were they? They wanted to survive or win medals, they thought of their families or of victory and the fatherland, though scarcely at that moment, not any more, they were trapped. But I thought unceasingly of murder. I didn't fire. A week later, when the battle held its breath, when we saw no more of the Allied troops, when only the planes tried to finish us off and by no means all had died who were to die there, I was sent back to Rome and court-martialled. I told them all about myself, but they wouldn't understand me and I was put in jail. I was condemned for cowardice in the face of the enemy and for undermining morale, there were a few other points too which I don't remember exactly any more. Then I was suddenly taken out of jail and sent north for treatment in a psychiatric clinic. I believe I was cured, and six months later I was put in another unit because there was nothing left of the old one, and we moved east into the battles of the retreat."

Hutter, who couldn't bear such long speeches and would have liked to persuade someone else to tell stories or jokes, said, breaking a pretzel: "Well, and how did the shooting go then?"

THE MAN didn't look at him, and instead of drinking again like all the others at that moment, he pushed his glass away into the middle of the table. He looked at me, then at Mahler and then at me again, and this time I turned my eyes away.

"No," he said finally, "I was cured. So it didn't work. You will understand that, gentlemen. A month later I was arrested and spent the rest of the war in a camp. You will understand, I couldn't shoot. If I could no longer shoot at a human being, how much less at an abstraction, at the 'Russians.' The word meant nothing to me. It conjured up no sort of picture, and you have to have some kind of picture in mind."

"A queer bird," Bertoni said to Hutter in a low voice: nevertheless I heard it, and I was afraid the man had heard it too.

Haderer beckoned to the waiter and asked for the bill.

We could now hear a swelling chorus of men's voices from the big hall; it sounded like the chorus in an opera when it has been banished behind the scenes. They were singing *"Heimat, deine Sterne. . . ."*

The stranger held his head bent, listening, then he said: "As though not a day had passed." And: "Good-night." He got up and walked, huge and quite upright, towards the door. Mahler also got up and, raising his voice, said: "Listen!" It was an expression he always used, but I knew that now he really did want to be listened to. And yet I

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saw that for the first time he was unsure of himself, he looked across at Friedl and me, as though in search of advice. We stared at him; there was no advice in our eyes.

WE LOST TIME over paying the bill. Mahler strode up and down, gloomy, meditating, and impatient. Suddenly he turned to the door, tore it open. We followed him because the singing had suddenly broken off. Only a few isolated and collapsing voices were still to be heard. And at the same time there was a movement in the passage that betrayed an action or a disaster.

In the passage we ran into several men who were yelling confusedly. Others stood in shocked silence. We didn't see the man anywhere. Someone was talking to Haderer, presumably the Colonel, white in the face and speaking in a treble voice. I heard scraps of sentences: ". . . . incomprehensible provocation . . . I mean to say . . . ex-servicemen. . . ." I shouted to Mahler to follow me, ran to the stairs and in a few leaps was up the steps, which led dark, damp, and stony, like a shaft out of a mine, into the night and the open. He was lying not far from the entrance to the cellar. I bent over him. He was bleeding from several wounds. Mahler knelt down beside me, took my hands away from the man's chest and indicated to me that he was already dead.

The night echoed within me and I was in my madness.

When I came home in the morning and there was no more turmoil in me, when I merely stood in my room, stood and stood, unable to move and unable to find the way to my bed, I saw the blood on the palm of my hand. I didn't shudder. It was as if through the blood I had received protection, not to become invulnerable, but so that the effluvium of my despair, my desire for vengeance, my rage could not force its way out of me. Never again. Never more. And if they should consume me, these homicidal thoughts that had arisen in me, they would not strike anyone, as this murderer had not murdered anyone and was only a victim—sacrificed to nothing. But who knows that? Who dares say that?

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Voyeur

Find the hidden face; a prize is offered.
The scene is green and summer. On the grass
The dresses spread, exhausted butterflies,
And smooth brown legs make soft confessions to
Rough trousers. Excited air
Is hushed with kissing.
Now search for the solitary, the uncoupled one:
Not in the leafy tentacles of trees,
He is no climber,
But close to earth, well-hidden, squat.
You see him now? Yes, there! His snarling grin
Bearded with leaves, his body bushed,
Invisible. See how his eyes are fat with glee
And horror. They fizz with unfulfilment's booze.
His tongue makes sure his lips are still in place
With quick red pats.
You've found him now, and you can take your prize,
Though, as you see, we do not offer cash
But recognition and its loaded cosh.

Vernon Scannell

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Edmund Wilson

Meetings with Max Beerbohm

ON THE AFTERNOONS of March 15 and 16, 1954, I was taken to call on Max Beerbohm by Mr. S. N. Behrman, the New York dramatist, who was then writing a book about him. Max was living in his villa at Rapallo, taken care of by Miss Elisabeth Jungmann, who for years had been the secretary of Gerhart Hauptmann. Miss Jungmann was intelligent and highly educated and, though German, she spoke and read English perfectly. She had specialised in men of genius and had been a godsend for Hauptmann and Max Beerbohm, who had known her when Hauptmann lived at Rapallo. I was told by Sam Behrman that Max had once said to her that if his wife should die, he did not know what would become of him. She had answered—Hauptmann died in 1946—that she would come to him wherever he was, and gave him an address that would reach her. He had put it in a book and forgotten about it and, after his wife's death, had not been able to find it; but she heard about him and immediately came to him. She was devoted to him and now took care of him with only one maid where his wife, Sam said, had had three servants.

The Villino Chiaro was pleasant and simple. It hung high above the blue water and had a terrace that looked down and a tower room that Max used for a library and studio. We came in through a hallway, on the wall of which one found the curious harlequin inn sign which is described in the *Words for Pictures* section of *Yet Again*. At the feet of the harlequin, who looked rather like Max, lay a mask on a tambourine, which so much resembled a bearded face that one took it at first for a decapitated head like that of John the Baptist in *Salomé*. (We were later shown a harlequin dressing-gown sewn together like a patchwork quilt from bits of material of different colours.) On the walls of a sort of anteroom hung a miniature of Max's father—who had been known, Sam Behrman told me, in his youth in Paris, on account of the magnificence of his style of living, as—a pun on his name—*"Superbe-homme."* On the same wall as the miniature were portraits of Max's grandparents on the continental side—both with a half-smiling look, the grandmother *"l'oeil espiègle."* They had a recognisable resemblance to Max, but seemed so much like the idealised characters of an eighteenth-century opera that I almost suspected Max, with his love of hoaxes, of having invented these grandparents himself; but when I met him the moment after, I felt that he must indeed have behind him a tradition of wit and elegance.

HE HAD JUST HAD an attack of flu and received us sitting in a chair in front of a little fire. He was eighty-two—it was two years before his death—and he was suffering from an inflammation which had encircled his round blue eyes with red rings. But his appearance surprised me by a kind of impressiveness which I had not expected to find. He always liked to represent himself in his caricatures with a kind of cherubic head and a frail and wispy figure, the extremities also diminishing; but he was actually rather taller than he looks in these, and his head was larger and stronger than I had imagined even from his photographs. There was something rather Germanic about his nose and jaw and his blond moustache. He struck me as both very Edwardian and as rather continental than English. He was a good deal more positive, also, than his writing would have led me to believe, even a little contentious—though it may have been I who stimulated this tendency. His hands were quite astonishing—they seemed unlike any others I had ever seen. Instead of

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being slender with tapering fingers, the fingers were long and of uniform thickness, almost like the legs of a spider crab, and they were sharpened at the ends like pencils. It was as if they were very large engraver's tools, the instruments of a formidable craftsman. He wore one ring with a green scarab.

I talked about the recent scholarly book on him written in English by a Dutchman, J. G. Riewald, and he was polite about it but obviously not much excited. He had not read "the parts he remembered," but there were many things he found he had forgotten. I asked about certain points in his caricatures which I had never understood. His memory of his drawings was perfect, and he was able to answer at once, in a way that showed how very carefully every detail had been planned. Who were the people in the procession of hump-nosed monsters who appeared in his *Fifty Caricatures*, with the simple caption, "Are we as welcome as ever?" Those, he said, were "the friends of Edward VII," and he went on to explain rather slyly that the occasion for this caricature had been the accession of George V. The friends were Sir Ernest Cassel, two Rothschilds, Lord Burnham and Baron de Hirsch. He added, after a second's pause, about the new king: "Didn't need to borrow money so often, don't you know?" He said nothing about these friends being Jewish. He was not, as has been sometimes said, Jewish himself, and I think that it was probably his delicacy which had restrained him from making the caption more explicit. He went on, as if apologetically, to describe how, having started the picture, he had found that his hand went on drawing without his thinking about it—as if he wanted to represent this caricature as having been executed involuntarily. I asked him whether the Polish of the question that the young Conrad puts to the old Conrad, in the series called *The Old and the Young Self*, were not a language that Max had invented. He said it was and repeated verbatim this imaginary exclamation in Polish.

WHY, I ASKED, weren't his drawings collected? Oh, he answered, it would be impossible to dig them all up. He had had periodical exhibitions, and the pictures had been bought by Tom, Dick and Harry—he had been very glad to sell them!—but Tom had given his away, and Dick had left his somewhere, and Harry didn't know what had become of his. I inquired about Walter Sickert, the only one of Max's subjects who looks different in almost every drawing—"He was Protean," Miss Jungmann put in—and Max gave me an account of Sickert. At first, he had been completely Whistlerian, his painting was all black and blue; but he was always having new ideas and deliberately changing his manner, and he would also transform his appearance. At one point, he had his hair cropped short; at another, he had had made for himself an enormous top hat —"he must have found an ancient block"— and wore trousers striped black and white in some curious way. He was a great linguist; his French was perfect, and he was able in a few weeks to pick up the patois of Venice. It was only after the First World War that his father became Danish, not German. I mentioned Max's drawing of Sickert "explaining away Piazza San Marco." Why was he explaining it away? He was always explaining, said Max. Sickert theorised too much; he would perhaps have made a good critic. The painter should be "an impassioned eye that sets down what he sees, or thinks he sees." (But he later went on to complain about painters who set down things "as nobody would see them.") The idea that Walter Sickert was the best English painter of his time was, Max thought, perfectly ridiculous. A question from Behrman brought out that he thought Wilson Steer was immensely Sickert's superior.

I found that he much enjoyed having his own jokes fed back to him. When I told Sam Behrman in his presence about his drawings or *bon mots*, he would chuckle without self-deprecation. I spoke of the little hoaxes, intended to upset the scholarly, that he used to let drop in his dramatic articles. "What are you thinking of?" "Well, your statement that Lady Macbeth was originally played by Shakespeare himself." He had forgotten about this and laughed. I told the story I had had from Isaiah Berlin of his meeting Max somewhere in London and hearing a young lady say that she had just seen Lady ———. "How is she?" "Just the same as ever." "I'm very sorry to hear it." He smiled: "Oh, did I say that?" Lady ——— had a loud voice and came from Chicago, and had married a conventional Englishman, who loathed her, and this was always apparent at their parties. One was accustomed to the situation of the wife's not liking the husband, but the situation was somehow different when the husband didn't like the wife.

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I SAID SOMETHING about his last album of caricatures: Noel Coward and the actors in *Bitter Sweet*. He said that in this and in a series that he had undertaken for the *Spectator*, he found that he was simply doing very careful likenesses that really expressed pity for their subjects—and then he had decided to stop. Pathos (pronounced with a short a) was no quality for a caricaturist. I could see that this had been true: the drawing of Noel Coward brought out his weakness but also made him appealing. He went on to say that something similar had happened in the case of Pellegrini ("Ape"): he had begun, after a certain age, making excellent likenesses which were no longer caricatures. So many of the drawings nowadays were ugly. (He meant artistically ugly. He had made clear in a foreword to a book by Ronald Searle that he regarded Searle's goblins and witches as distinguished exceptions to this.) Now, his own things—"though I am perhaps not the one to say it, and I had nearly left it unsaid"—were very pretty drawings. "I venture to say that even the Milner [which I had told him of having seen in the common room of one of the Oxford colleges] is not disagreeable to have around." At one point, he brought out and showed us a little pink-and-blue watercolour of Edward VII, which I believe he had recently done, and said something like, "Now, that's a pretty little drawing."

I asked about the additional passage for his parody of Henry James, *The Mote in the Middle Distance*, which he had sent to Edmund Gosse and which Gosse had written him of pasting in his copy of the *Christmas Garland*. That, he said, was a new and better ending that he had thought of after the book was published—a more emotional ending, like those of *The Golden Bowl* and *The Wings of the Dove*. He recited a part of the latter: " 'Well she stretched out her wings, and it was to that they reached. They cover us.' ... But she turned to the door, and her handshake was now the end. 'We shall never be again as we were'..." This had not impressed me much when I read it, but Max Beerbohm thought it beautiful, and he made it sound beautiful. I quoted the first line of the sextet of the very funny sonnet that he and Gosse, doing alternate lines, had written about Henry James: "How different from Sir Arthur Conan Doyle"—and he went on to recite the rest, making it, too, sound quite beautiful:

"You stand marmoreal darling of the Few,
Lord of the troubled speech and single eye."

His sensitivity to language reminded me of the way my old teacher, Alfred Rolfe, used to read, at school "morning exercises," his fastidiously chosen passages of prose or verse. I reflected, in connection with this afterwards, that that kind of fine appreciation of literature was something that had largely disappeared. Such connoisseurs as Max Beerbohm and Rolfe experienced the words in an intimate way and seemed to caress the cadences. Max made a remark that puzzled me about something I had written about *The Wings of the Dove*, and I asked him what he thought of the theory that the governess in *The Turn of the Screw* was supposed to be a neurotic case. This aroused him: he denounced this theory, starting out with a sentence which began, "Some morbid pedant, prig and fool"... I explained that this objectionable person was I, and we argued about the subject a little. We argued, also, about the new alphabet advocated by Bernard Shaw, which Max thought was an absurd and outrageous idea. I pointed out that the abolition of five of the characters of the old Russian alphabet and certain other spelling reforms had encountered a similar opposition but had made the language easier and clearer. "When England and America are communised," he answered, "they will doubtless have a phonetic alphabet." He was under the erroneous impression that Shaw had invented an alphabet and wanted it imposed by law.

IT WAS EVIDENT that he personally disliked Bernard Shaw, as it was plain that he loved Henry James. He said that Shaw had "queered his chances" of being buried in Westminster Abbey by making some démarche to that end. He had insisted on getting the Webbs buried there, as they were, which was entirely "inappropriate." Then in his will he had left instructions that his ashes should be sprinkled in his garden—"a dreadful idea, you know, with dogs and cats about!" I said that I did think it was rather absurd for Shaw to have left as a national shrine his apparently rather commonplace house; but I tried to soften the picture—Shaw has always been a hero of mine—by suggesting that egoism like Shaw's was a disability—that you had to carry with you all your life. When he was young, it had been amusing, he had carried it off with panache, but it had become disagreeable in his later years, and one saw then that it was compulsive, incurable.

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Max described to us in great detail how Shaw had looked when he had first known him in London. He had had smallpox (I do not know whether this is true), which had left his complexion absolutely white, and he had whiskers so straggling that, as someone said, they looked like seaweed on a rock; his eyes were very pale, too pale—later, his eyebrows grew shaggy and shaded them, which somewhat improved the impression. Shaw perhaps hadn't liked Max's caricatures, but for him any kind of attention paid him was better than none at all. I said that Max had brought out in his caricatures that Shaw had had well-shaped hands.

"Yes: he had beautiful hands—the hands of a woman rather than a man."

"He had an erect carriage," I said.

"Yes, and he moved well. He made a good impression in this way—unless one saw him from the back: the back of his head came straight down and made a line with his neck. At first nights in his early days, he wasn't true to his principles—he wore evening clothes to the theatre, but an old suit so shiny that, if you were behind him, you could see your face in it like a mirror. Later he became quite well-dressed. I was rather sorry. I think people ought to dress according to their...." He left it in the air.

He had heard Shaw speak once at a meeting, at which, after his speech, he had answered questions and hecklers, with perfect readiness, without notes. "In a way it was better than what he wrote, you know. He was a wonderful debater—as [*slyly*] you see in his plays."

MAX'S ANIMUS against Shaw appeared, further, in the laborious pains he had taken to disfigure Archibald Henderson's book about him. Miss Jungmann brought out this volume—it had been given to William Archer, then returned after Archer's death—but I did not think it really very funny, because it showed too much a jeering hatred that Max usually kept in leash in his published drawings. One felt that it was not merely a question of kidding the awe-stricken biographer, but that Max could not stand the idea that Bernard Shaw had become a great man. He himself had perhaps a little always felt on the margin of things, and he was likely to betray irritation in dealing with great men who took themselves seriously and became public institutions: see his attitude toward Goethe in *Quia Imperfectum*. He had, in any case, by a most cunning use of ink, turned the photographs of such people as William Morris and Granville Barker into horrible prognathous gorillas. One felt that he really wanted to degrade Bernard Shaw and everyone connected with him. The only thing I can remember in his published work that at all approaches these monsters is his drawing of the Warden of Merton in his earliest album of caricatures. The bad little schoolboy in Max Beerbohm was also in evidence in the doctored books which we were taken to his study to see. Some of his "misleading title pages" are reproduced in the Sotheby catalogue for the sale of his papers and books: a picture of a seasick Victorian couple in Belloc's *The Cruise of the Nona*, a grinning and winking cockney in Meredith's *Essay on Comedy*, and a villainous-looking Irishman with a gun in an early volume of Yeats' poems. There was also Housman's *Last Poems*, with a drawing of the cast of a Wagner opera, and the title-page of a volume of Chesterton's essays was covered with an expanding caricature, in which Chesterton displayed in his open mouth the printed words "thirteenth edition." I found these a little shocking, and when I came down, I told Max that my nerves had been shaken by them. He had operated on such an extensive scale in desecrating the books of his friends that it was as if he did not want them approached without his having administered a preliminary kick. Going back to his work after visiting him, I came to recognise that the feelings behind it were somewhat sharper than I had suspected. Henry James had been treated with relative tenderness. On the title-page of one of his books, Max had done a little drawing of him, leaning forward and gesturing with his hands, in a paroxysm of "getting wound up," as Sam Behrman said, to express some complex impression. I have heard that he was in the habit of pasting unexpected and scandalous words into the volumes of such Georgian poets as John Drinkwater, breaking the books at those places and leaving them for his guests on the bedside table, and I was sorry to hear that none of these turned up for the Sotheby sale.

I WAS SURPRISED to discover that Max did not care for Virginia Woolf. He had a good word only for her criticism, and he did not seem enthusiastic about that. He had just been reading her diary, which he said showed low vitality and was "pettifogging," overanxious

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about things that concerned herself and not considerate about anyone else. I had somewhat shared this last impression. Leonard Woolf, he said, must have taken very good care of her, and must have been hard put to it to talk with her over her reviews. "Poor soul!" he added. I said that she had evidently been a peculiar kind of snob—a snob without really belonging to a social group with whom to be snobbish. She had been so extraordinary about Thomas Hardy. It is plain that when she went to see him, she expected to find something like the old gaffers in his novels, and she expressed surprise at his *savoir faire* in offering her husband a whisky and soda. Max did not like her novels, and expressed himself contemptuously and pettishly about the "stream of consciousness" in general. Everybody had thoughts that went through his head, but it was absurd to try to make a novel of them. He liked to read a *story*, to have characters and see what they did. I stood up for *Between the Acts*, which he had not read, but I did not attempt to argue with him about the stream of consciousness. I was rather dismayed to discover that old age could make it impossible to react any more to new excellence in an art one had practised and loved. I should have thought that for Max Beerbohm, with his exquisite sense of style, Virginia Woolf would have been the writer of the Bloomsbury set in whom he would have felt most interest. But he never seemed to have got beyond Lytton Strachey. He had lost the pleasant world of his youth, the world to which he had belonged. The cities were no longer attractive. People in London, he said, were always in a crisis about something—about going somewhere or catching a bus. The old leisurely days were gone. Lytton Strachey had still lived in this world; Virginia Woolf somehow not.

THEY INVITED us to tea the next day, and we came at 4.30 instead of 3.30 and did not stay so long. To-day he sat up at the table and presided over the tea. His head was sunk between his shoulders, and the hair at the back of his bald domed head was uncut and hung over his collar. He would look up at us as he chuckled in a way that seemed a little deprecatory. We had tea and sherry and an apéritif, with cakes and hors d'œuvres. Max drank a single glass of something from a bottle without a label. While Miss Jungmann was out of the room, he sneaked an extra cigarette, and when she came back and saw it, she commented, "When the Devil...!"

He said that he had never been able to caricature Somerset Maugham, had tried it several times, then given it up; but he implied that Sutherland, in his portrait of Maugham, had made up for Max's failure—he had, he said, "carried caricature as far as it would go." After painting Somerset Maugham, Sutherland had written to Max asking him to sit for his portrait, and Max had replied that though he had in his time "made monsters of people" himself, "the bully was always a coward," and that, knowing the portrait of Maugham, he had decided to decline this offer. "Now that I'm old and afflicted-looking, I shouldn't want to be painted anyway, but even in my prime, I don't think I should have wanted to be painted by Sutherland."

I asked him about Sem, the French caricaturist, whose work I greatly admired. Max had caricatured Sem and had known him. He said that Sem had been able to do things that he couldn't do. He was able to make sketches on the spot, which Max never did—sometimes just drawing parts of people: an ear and an arm, etc.—and then would put them together, and there would be a perfect likeness. Sem was extremely good at doing the types at the races and Monte Carlo: *"Tout Paris."* He came to England and drew people at Ascot, and then would ask who they were, and one could always tell him because the likenesses were unmistakable. Max himself could not caricature people unless he had seen quite a lot of them—had heard their voices, caught the tone of their minds. I spoke of the animated album, in which Sem has *Tout Paris* doing the Charleston and the Black Bottom—so wonderful in its imagining of the movements of different bodies and different personalities. Sem's people were always in movement. The loyal Miss Jungmann, at this, produced the recently published volume of R. C. Trevelyan's *Selected Poems*, with its frontispiece by Max of Trevelyan slogging along with a knapsack on one of his hikes. Max had lunched once with Sem at Dieppe, and they had known that people were thinking, "Two caricaturists lunching together: they must be up to something!" Sem was a good mimic, and he had imitated Coquelin, who was also there: *"Je ne parle jamais de moi. Pourquoi? Par-ce-que..."* and there would follow a long explanation of why it was characteristic that he should never speak of himself.

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They decided to send Coquelin a note, saying that they had arranged for a window from which to watch the fireworks that night and inviting him to share it with them. He had not answered. "I think he must have been insulted," Max added with a certain complacency. Sem could caricature women, which Max had never been able to do. I said that he had done well with Zuleika Dobson in his frontispiece to the new edition of the novel. "Oh, that was just a caricature of a pretty girl." I thought the point was—since he had caricatured the women of the Rossetti circle and occasionally imaginary women—that he was too much of an old-fashioned gentleman to be willing to make real living ones ridiculous.

I had said to Sam Behrman that I thought Max's head rather resembled Bismarck's, and Sam now repeated this to him. It was not, it turned out, the first time that this comparison had been made, and he got out a little drawing that he had done of himself as Bismarck—wearing an iron cross which contrasted with his mild dreamy gaze. Bismarck had had, he said, an astonishingly high voice, like a woman's. Hilaire Belloc, also, with his square jaw, his thickset figure and his head set down between his shoulders, surprised one by his high voice. He used to sing French hunting songs in a sweet and exquisite way—"it was rather like a very large nightingale."

I asked him what he thought of P. G. Wodehouse—the enthusiasm for whom of some people I am unable to understand—and he replied that he could never read more than fifty pages of any of Wodehouse's books. At first he would be entertained by Wodehouse's handling of language—"almost like Cinquevalli" (the great juggler of the last century, of whom Max had once written), but he lost interest after that. It was difficult for him now to read novels: he couldn't believe any longer in the things that were supposed to happen in them. Apropos of George Moore, he said that Dr. Johnson had declared that there were two kinds of talkers: those who talked from a stream, of whom Burke was the example, and those who talked from a tank. Moore talked from a stream, like so many Irishmen. When I mentioned Compton Mackenzie, he said, "Ah, there's a man who writes from a stream!" *Sinister Street,* he thought, would last. It was wonderful how Mackenzie, in writing of Oxford, had caught with such delicate precision the nuances of the seasons and their moods: Eights Week, St. Mark's Eve, Lent term, Easter holidays, etc. I said that I had just been in Oxford and told him that the traffic there now, on account of the Nuffield works, was as bad as in any big city. Yes, he said, and they could perfectly well have prevented it. Nuffield had kept a bicycle shop when he was in Oxford. Almost nobody rode a bicycle then: it was "the earmark of vulgarity."

I TRIED TO DRAW him out about the suicides of the 'nineties and the early years of the present century: Hubert Crackanthorpe, St. John Hankin, John Davidson. I had always wondered about them. Did they lack conviction of their talent? Or did they and the other writers and artists who died relatively young at that time really feel that the *fin de siècle* implied that their world must come to an end? Max did not throw much light on this—whether from discretion in discussing the private lives of men he had known or from a distaste for dwelling on tragedy or from a simple lack of interest, I did not know. Hubert Crackanthorpe he had known a little. His father had been a successful barrister, and Max had sometimes gone to his parents' house. He had "thrown himself into the Seine and couldn't swim—some sudden fit of insanity, I suppose." His short stories had shown talent, but "*le mot juste* had a way of coming between the lady and gentleman that the story was about." Hankin he had known quite well. He had not been surprised when *he* committed suicide—he was rather a sad man. He was supposed to be unhappily married. Of John Davidson, he said, too, strangely, that he had "thrown himself into the water and couldn't swim." I said something favourable about Davidson's poetry, and Max responded warmly that he was the best English poet of that period. Davidson had been a dominie in Scotland, and had thrown it up and come to London. Once, in the Café Royal, he had set out to sing to Max a translation of the Psalms into Scots and had been told by the head waiter that he was annoying the other guests. I tried to probe further by asking whether Davidson had been poor and desperate. "Yes," he replied rather vaguely, "but he had enough for himself and his family to live on."

He talked always with natural style—quietly and unemphatically, the words well and easily chosen, always trying to express what he thought, and except for an occasional quaint phrase, with no effort to talk for effect. There

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is, fortunately, a recording made by Angel of his reading of two of his essays—*The Crime* and *London Revisited*—which preserves the sound of his voice, so casual and conversational even in rendering these carefully-written pieces.

When we left, I told Max that I was going to send him Angus Wilson's *For Whom the Cloche Tolls* and my essay on *The Turn of the Screw*, in a simplified phonetic alphabet, but provided with a key.

IN THE ENTRANCE HALL and in one of the rooms, he had painted some murals of his favourite subjects: Chamberlain and Churchill and Balfour, Chesterton and George Moore and Henry James, old friends like Will Rothenstein and Reginald Turner, who had now become rather obscure. He had taken his creations with him, his whole vision of the London world, into the long retirement of his exile. To his villa on the Gulf of Genoa, they still flocked to keep him company. I have spoken of his new water-colour of Edward VII, and I learn that the last caricature he drew was still another of George Moore. And seeing them there made me recognise as I had not quite done before the completeness and vitality of this vision. Has there ever been anything like it in the realm of caricature? Gillray has his recurrent characters and a grotesque world in which they move, but he is brutal and crude beside Beerbohm. Sem is perhaps the nearest thing; but he does not have Max's historical sense or his intellectual insight. Though Max makes all his subjects absurd, though no one is ever idealised except in a comic way, there is a hierarchy of values here: men he despises and men he admires, men that he rejoices in and men that he likes to make ugly. His work as a caricaturist is in general on a higher imaginative level than his stories, his essays, and his parodies. Virginia Woolf in her *Diary* quotes him as saying to her:

> About his own writing, dear Lytton Strachey said to me: "First I write one sentence; then I write another." That's how I write. And so I go on. But I have a feeling writing ought to be like running through a field. That's your way. Now, how do you go down to your room after breakfast—what do you feel? I used to look at the clock and say, "Oh, dear me, it's time I began my article.... No, I'll read the paper first." I never wanted to write. But I used to come home from a dinner party and take my brush and draw caricature after caricature. They seemed to bubble up from here... [he pressed his stomach]. That was a kind of inspiration, I suppose. What you said in your beautiful essay about me and Charles Lamb was quite true. He was crazy; he had the gift: genius. I'm too like Jack Horner. I pull out my thumb. It's too rounded, too perfect.

Yet I read and re-read Max Beerbohm as I do not do any other British prose writer of the period in which I grew up, with the exception of Bernard Shaw. It seems to me queer when I find Max Beerbohm speaking, as he does in some essay, of G. K. Chesterton as "a genius" whose brilliance quite put Max in the shade. The paradoxical epigrams of Chesterton, which became so mechanical and monotonous, are mostly unreadable to-day. But Max Beerbohm's prose has endured. Since it never asserts itself —except perhaps in the exuberance of his early preciosity—one can always forget and find it fresh.

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Walter Laqueur

Homecoming

A Letter from Wroclaw

ONE MORNING last May I found myself in a somewhat bewildered state on a bench in the *Park Poludnia* in the Polish city of Wroclaw. It was a fine morning, sunny but not too warm, some well-nourished swans were cruising effortlessly on the little lake, a cuckoo was calling, and great plots of pansies, a flower that is to the Poles these days what the shamrock is to the Irish, were in bloom. I had not lost my way; in fact I knew every little path in that splendid park. I could recall having sat on that very bench twenty-five years before, almost to the day, and listening to what may have been the grandparent of that cuckoo; but then it had been the *Südpark* in the German city of Breslau. The city I had known has disappeared like Herculaneum or Pompeii (or, as some may prefer, like Sodom and Gomorrah); many landmarks are still the same, the Oder still flows through the town and quite a few streets and buildings look exactly as they did a quarter of a century ago. But then I had parents, acquaintances, friends, in that city. Now I did not know a soul. The character of the city had totally changed, there were new people around who talked a language that I could understand only with difficulty. I felt somewhat like the hero of H. G. Wells' *The Time Machine*. The combination of the *déjà vu* with the totally unexpected was confusing; it would almost have been easier to accept if the city had disappeared altogether.

Even now I find it difficult to write. I try to concentrate on the present, and yet my thoughts return to those days in May, 1938. I had just graduated from school, and my future was entirely in the hands of various committees, boards, and consulates. I had much free time and came to the *Südpark* almost every morning; I remember reading here Céline's *Voyage au Bout de la Nuit*. What fascinated me in this story of cynicism and despair I do not know; perhaps I had an inkling that another journey to the end of the night was about to begin? Or would it be wrong to attribute so prophetic an instinct to one who had not yet turned eighteen? I recall meeting an old teacher of mine one of those mornings in the *Südpark*. He was no Nazi and had been forced to retire before he had reached the age limit. He was deeply pessimistic about the future, and strongly advised me to clear out as soon as possible. He spoke about very difficult days ahead, about envying my ability to get away, and he ended by asking me to come back when the worst was over. He turned to go but suddenly seemed to remember something and said: "You will recall that I tried to explain to you, not always with success, the song of the Nibelungen. Do look up Hagen's story one of these days." That was the last I saw of Dr. U., walking away from me with his ebony walking-stick. There is no trace of him now, nor of any of his pupils (1921 proved to be a bad year to be born as far as the chances of survival were concerned in those parts of Europe). I have looked up the story of Hagen, but I am not sure what he meant. He may have referred to Hagen's words before he went to his last battle, that everything had happened just as he had foreseen. ("*...es ist auch so ergangen, wie ich mir hatte gedacht*"). But there is another incident in the story of the Nibelungen which has intrigued me for some time: when Hagen crosses the Danube together with King Gunther's armed escort on his way to Attila's court, a party of mermaids tells him that they are all going to perish—with the exception of the King's chaplain. To prove them wrong, Hagen

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pushes the priest into the torrent. But he is carried by the current to the safe shore, while Hagen and his comrades are killed in the battle they foolishly provoke.

THE STRANGER coming to Breslau in the 1930s received a leaflet at the central railway station which told him all he needed to know: that the city was located in the alluvium of the Oder valley, 119·98 metres above sea level, that it was the biggest, the most beautiful, the most important city of East Germany, with a population of roughly 625,000. He was advised to look at the magnificent baroque buildings as well as the monumental modern structures such as the *Jahrhunderthalle*, with the largest cupola (and the biggest organ) in the world. He learned that there was "a very active social life," and, generally speaking, a very *gemütlich* atmosphere. If he was a philosopher he could join either the Kant or the Schopenhauer Society, as a Mason he would find "Herman zur Beständigkeit" or "Settegast zur deutschen Treue" very hospitable lodges, and the Association of Christian Maidens would take care of young women without relations in the city. Anyway, he was bound to like *Breslauer Korn* (a local *schnaps*), and *Schlesisches Himmelreich*, a dish which, if memory serves me aright, consisted mainly of baked fruit.

The guide was well-meaning but somewhat misleading. In fact, Breslau did not differ greatly from other cities in Eastern Central Europe. The streets in the older parts of the town were rather narrow, the façades of the houses very much like one another—and not only the sombre, dark-grey blocks of flats of the working-class quarters—and there were large factories and markets. In brief, it was a city of work, not of *savoir vivre*. There were no aristocracy or high society as in Berlin, no royal merchants as in Hamburg, no artists' quarter as in Munich. The university was a fairly recent establishment by Central European standards, and the city had not produced any important politician with the single exception of Ferdinand Lassalle—but of him the burghers preferred not to be reminded. There were some fine actors and musicians, but they went off to Berlin as soon as they had made their names. There had been some outstanding writers and poets, but that was after the Thirty Years War, a long time ago. People did not travel much in those days and many thought, therefore, that Breslau was simply wonderful.

Before 1914, people said, things had been different; my own recollections go back only to the late 'twenties. But my father came to Breslau from a little provincial town around the turn of the century and I remember him and his friends telling me about the "good old days": the colourful parades on the Emperor's birthday, the concerts with Bülow, Nikisch, and Mahler, the *Frühschoppen* breakfasts at Hansen, Kempinski or Brill (dinner *à la carte* for 75 Pfennig, and what a dinner!), the Sunday morning walks on the promenades along the former city walls and the town moat. They seldom mentioned the other side of the picture; poverty and drunkenness in the working-class quarters; the insipid taste manifested in painting, furniture, and interior decoration; the Byzantine manners and customs of Wilhelminian Germany, led by an aristocracy that had long ago outlived its social function, and an arrogant officer corps that deemed itself far superior to all other mortals. Yet, despite ugliness, poverty, and the lack of fresh air, it must have been a very confident age. Progress was in evidence, prosperity was widespread, technical advances were made almost each year; amenities that have become known in England only in recent years, such as central heating, were already in general use. There had been no war for forty years and everybody was very optimistic, including those sinister fellows, those radical revolutionaries, the Social Democrats. The first taxi-cabs appeared in front of the central railway station and gradually replaced the horse-drawn carriages; first-class coachmen had white lacquered top hats, their second-class colleagues wore black hats with silver lace—there must be no mistake about a man's station in life. Everybody was very patriotic, and in 1914 went off to fight for *Kaiser* and *Vaterland*.

When the war was over, the province of Posen and parts of Upper Silesia had to be ceded to Poland; Breslau lost much of its *Hinterland*. There was a feeling of stagnation, of narrowed horizons and limited prospects, though economic progress continued on a modest scale despite inflation and world economic crisis. Yet the former confidence had disappeared; Breslau, once an important junction, had become a terminus. I have some memories of the city as it was around 1930; the crowds of unemployed men in the streets discussing politics, the frequent elections, and the brawls almost every Sunday in which a few people usually got killed. My own interests at the time were directed more

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to football and athletics, in which, unfortunately, my home town never excelled; I remember the terrible thrashing the Everton team gave our city eleven. We had half a dozen daily newspapers, and I tried to see all of them, the beginnings of a disease which became chronic in later life: the *Schlesische Zeitung*, arch-reactionary and very proud to have published in 1813 the King's "appeal to his people" to rise against Napoleon; the democratic *Breslauer Zeitung*, which folded because there were so few liberals left apart from the Jews; and the Catholics, the Social Democrats, the Communists, and of course the Nazis, had their own papers as well. (Now the Polish journalists have a magnificent club near the town moat with first-rate abstract pictures on the walls, very good coffee, and modern furniture. But the two newspapers they produce are even poorer than were the local *Käseblättchen*.) In the elections of March 5th, 1933, the National Socialist German Workers' Party received 50·2 per cent of the votes in the Breslau district. What happened subsequently in the city did not differ greatly from events in other parts of Germany. I vividly remember the speeches, the demonstrations, the torchlight parades which hailed the dawn of the new era. The teachers in the *humanistisches Gymnasium* told us, with varying degrees of conviction, what bliss it was to be alive in that dawn.

I WANTED to see the house in which we lived when I was a child, but had some difficulty in finding the street. The names of the streets had of course been changed; but that was not the main problem. I had expected to see a house, or its ruins, or perhaps a new building, but there was nothing, not even a trace that human beings had lived and died there. There was a forlorn signpost in the middle of nowhere marking the spot as "Ulica Skwierzynska—crossing Zelazna." The rubble had been removed years ago, weeds were sprouting and dandelions, a few shrubs and a solitary tree had taken root. Some children were playing in a nearby street in which a single house was standing; they did not hurry to let me pass; cars are rarely to be seen in these parts. Half a mile or so further on St. Carolus Church was standing; a nurse had once taken me there and explained in great detail the horrors of purgatory and hellfire. In a different direction, a few hundred yards away, there were signs of life in a big ugly redbrick building, apparently a school. For a few minutes I stared at the great sundial and the city coat-of-arms beneath it—of course, there were trees in front, we used to collect chestnuts there! The area would have seemed, to visitors who had not known it before, very peaceful and utterly empty. The effect it had on me was different; nothingness can make a stronger impact than destruction and ruin.

In this area, the southern part of the town, tens of thousands of people had once lived; yet the story of its destruction is very brief. During the first five years of the war Breslau was a long way from the front. It became, in fact, the air-raid shelter of the Reich at one stage, and its population grew to about a million. In January, 1945, with the approach of the Soviet armies, a fanatic *Gauleiter*, Hanke, had the defeatist burgomaster hanged in public, and organised a last-ditch defence. In this Hanke was, in a way, successful; it took the Russians about three months to advance a mile and a half. As a reward, Hitler, in his Testament, made him supreme leader of the S.S. in succession to the traitor Himmler—by that time the S.S. had, however, ceased to exist. *Gauleiter* Hanke literally vanished into thin air; he flew out of Breslau a few days before the city capitulated—it was the only major city not to surrender before the armistice. We do not know what became of that efficient *Gauleiter*. The price the city had to pay for having been turned into a fortress was appalling; the whole southern and western part was destroyed, and the centre of the town was a shambles. When the surveyors came to assess the damage they said that 60 per cent of the city had been destroyed, which was a lower figure than that for Warsaw and some German cities. I do not know how destruction is measured beyond a certain point; in Breslau, at any rate, unlike Berlin, Kassel, or Nuremberg, it seemed fatal because it coincided with the expulsion of the population of the city. Fewer than 20,000 had stayed there when it became a fortress, the others had been evacuated during the winter. Then *Breslau* became *Wroclaw*. In the following year all but a few thousand of the remaining Germans were expelled. Slowly the immigration of Poles got under way; by 1947 the city again had 200,000 inhabitants; in 1949 it passed the 300,000 mark. The newcomers were people of very different social and cultural backgrounds; peasants from backward Carpathian mountain villages which had been ceded to Russia; intellectuals from Lvov (Lvov University was transferred to Wroc-

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law); soldiers from German P.O.W. camps; re-emigrants from Western Europe. Russian military administration handed the city over to the Poles, the big railway wagon factory resumed production, and the local theatre staged *Pygmalion*—all while the rats were still feeding on corpses in the streets that had once been a battlefront. Wroclaw remained a rubble heap long after other cities had re-emerged from the ashes.

THE LEADING BOOKSHOPS were on the West and North Side of the central city square, opposite the statue of a Prussian king. The statue, needless to say, has been replaced by a new one; of Aleksander Fredro, the Polish Molière. The secondhand bookshop provides a welcome surprise; the employees are knowledgeable and helpful, the prices reasonable, and —unlike in Russia—one is permitted to approach the shelves. Many of the books are in German; I even spotted copies of the telephone directory for 1937 and 1942 and similar items of local interest. There are hundreds of books—side by side—claiming that Silesia and Breslau were "always German," and others that maintain that Wroclaw and Dolny Slask have been "Polish from time immemorial." The Germans take the year 1242 as their starting point; the German city of Breslau was founded after the Mongol assault had been repulsed. But no! say the Poles, we were there much earlier; excavations in the city and the suburbs have proved the existence of pre-Slavonic settlements during the early Stone Age. During the Iron Age the Lusatians lived there, and they were, for sure, the forefathers of the Slavs. The Germans violently disagree. During the excavations for the *Autobahn* south of the city they found two big subterranean caves containing tons of amber, which they say "could only have belonged to the Wandalers" (not to be confused with the Vandals). And who were the Wandalers but the forefathers of the Germans? Nobody seems to dispute that. The Poles, however, counter that around the year 1000 Wratislawa was a Polish city. At that time the Polish kings, the Piasts, called in German settlers to help colonise the country. True enough, the Germans reply, but "the Piasts became Germans by intermarriage, and anyway, who made the miserable village of 1000 A.D. what it subsequently became—one of the most important towns of mediæval Europe, more important as a trading centre than Frankfurt, or Berlin, of which hardly anybody had heard at the time...." I have always found these disputations somewhat tedious; how can serious people invest so much time and energy in proving and disproving half-truths? But the struggle continues unabated, each side insisting on its version of the past. The Germans insist that a great historical injustice has been done them; the Poles conclude that the German *Drang nach Osten* was always aggressive and reactionary.

The Poles feel strongly about those Pan-German ideologists who claim that the conquest of territory and the assimilation of the Slavonic people were a "historic trend," one which indicated the "physical and intellectual vigour" of the German nation, and which had "spread civilisation in a part of the world in which there existed the necessity to import all elements of culture from Germany." The quotations I have used are from Karl Marx. I know it is unfair. But the Poles, too, ought to be reminded of some of the facts of life. Like the Russians, they prefer not to rely on what Marx wrote about their country; their heroes are Boleslav Wrymouth, Ladislav the Short, Casimir the Restorer, and their like. These absurd exercises were provoked, it is only fair to add, by generations of German *Ostforscher* who proclaimed that the Slavs were and always would be an inferior race.

At school we were never told that there had been any Poles in Silesia; but there was an organisation called *Bund Deutscher Osten* (headed by a Professor Oberländer from Königsberg) which distributed maps and leaflets on the German East with many quotations starting with Tacitus and Prokop and ending with Adolf Hitler. One of them I found again in my Wroclaw bookshop. It ended with the following words: So let us all remember the old inscription on the Reval town hall,

> He is right who fights.
> He who stops fighting
> has lost all rights....

It made curious reading that morning in the Polish city of Wroclaw.

I cannot recall having met a Pole when I grew up in Breslau in the 'twenties and 'thirties. True enough, there were many people with names like Stefanski or Osnojewitch, but this was not uncommon in Germany; the forward line of the German football team used to read like an excerpt from a Warsaw telephone directory. Anyway, these bearers of Polish names

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were completely assimilated, they were 150 per cent German. There was a small Polish minority, but somehow one never met them, or more probably one did not recognise them; they had been to local schools and they spoke German without an accent. In Upper Silesia the situation was different; east of the Oder there had been a Polish majority, particularly in the villages, until 1914.

When the war ended there were some 40,000 people in Breslau who opted for Poland. Some were slave labourers who had worked in the city, others were Polish prisoners of war, but the majority consisted of local residents. Some had never made a secret of the fact that they belonged to a national minority. Others discovered their Polish patriotism only when faced with the threat of expulsion and loss of property; because they were Catholic, had a Slavonic family name and remembered a few words of Polish, they thought they would pass. (Many of them did pass, but the new authorities had to introduce Polish language courses for them.) The percentage of these *autochthoni*, small in Wroclaw, was substantial in Upper Silesia; the newcomers from Eastern and Central Poland regarded them as Germans, and often as ex-Nazis; there was tension and it continues to this day.

There is a great deal of anti-Polish literature on the shelves of those bookshops, starting with publications of the early years of the century. By their side are the Polish anti-German publications (from Roman Dmowski to the books and magazines of the Polish Western Institute in Poznan). I cannot help thinking that these historians could be more profitably employed. Breslau/Wroclaw has a past that is both German and Slav. But what happened to the city in 1945 has nothing to do with mediæval history, nor even with events in the 19th century. Don't we all by now know the causes?

ALL TRACES of German rule in Breslau have been very carefully removed. This includes statues, inscriptions, memorial tablets, road signs, and so on. Sometimes the old inscriptions have been erased but nothing put in their place, and the result is confusing (particularly in certain public conveniences). The German language is not heard or seen, except in conversations with strangers who want to help, in the secondhand bookshop just mentioned, and in cemeteries. There was a small German-language newspaper in Wroclaw in the middle 'fifties, but it has since disappeared. There was one remaining sign—an inscription in Ulica Wlodkowica (Wallstrasse); it indicated that this had been the office of the Jewish community. (It still is, of an infinitely smaller Polish Jewish community which had nothing to do with the German Jewry who had lived in the city.) The inscription was cut into the stone and so could not have been removed without doing damage to the building. It is a bitter irony—and yet somehow it seems appropriate—that chance should have singled out the local Jews to bear witness to the German past. There were some 20,000 Jews in Breslau of whom half emigrated in time, the remainder being deported and killed. This comparatively small section of the population had a disproportionate influence on the cultural life of the city—and beyond. The assimilation of a large section of German Jewry was very far advanced (much more so than in Britain or the United States). The result of this German-Jewish symbiosis was a culture disapproved of by German nationalists. Nevertheless it had an impact the effects of which can be discerned to the present day.

Its influence extended far beyond Breslau: for writers and musicians born in the city who became prominent emigrated to Berlin. There were also many physicians, physicists, chemists, botanists, and biologists of world distinction whose origins were in Breslau or the surrounding countryside. Looking through a biographical dictionary of the world's leading scientists recently, I noticed how often the entries read *b. Breslau*, or, even more frequently, *b. Lissa* (or *b. Ostrowo*); small villages such as these on the former German-Polish boundaries produced more leading scientists between 1860 and 1910 than any Western capitals with the possible exception of London and Paris. With official careers virtually closed to them in pre-1914 Germany, many bright young German Jews were almost inevitably drawn into the then rapidly expanding sciences.

The fact that Breslau became a cultural centre in the 19th century was to a great extent a Jewish achievement. True enough, the German-Jewish symbiosis was a hybrid, and therefore dubious, problematical: but it had outstanding achievements to its credit. Who could have foreseen that it would end as it did, with a few thousand elderly people assembled on the platforms of the central railway station one summer night in 1942? Fortunately, most of them did not know that from this trip there would be no return. My parents were among them.

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As I WRITE these lines in the late hours of the evening in my hotel room, the figure of the city's liberal rabbi comes back to my mind. He lived very near this place, on what is now Kosciuszko Square. Dr. V. was one of the most widely educated men I have known, and one of the kindest; he had written a most erudite book on the history of Rome and had one of the largest private libraries in town Sometimes I saw him in the municipal library with an apologetic smile: "I am sure I have that book somewhere at home but I can't find it." When I went to see him last in 1938 he was a broken man. He had always been a German patriot, bitterly opposed to any Jewish nationalist aspirations; his whole world was now in ruins. These were the days of Hitler's great successes, and we talked about the uncertain future. He was a mild man, yet on that day there was something of the fire of an Old Testament prophet in him; he quoted Isaiah to me, the passage about the coming day of vengeance, and even Paul's *Epistle to the Romans* 12.19—I have mentioned that he was a *liberal* rabbi.... When I was already in the corridor he added as an afterthought: "Though the mills of God grind slowly...."

Gottes Mühlen mahlen langsam, mahlen aber trefflich klein.
Ob aus Langmut er sich säumet, bringt mit Schärf er alles ein.
(Friedrich von Logau)

I OFTEN READ with interest the sophisticated travelogues, in magazines like *Holiday*, on the charm of the quaint little streets on the *rive gauche*, the enchanting corners of the Ile St. Louis, and the appeal of the Champs Elysées on a sunny Sunday afternoon. I wish my task were as easy. For all the world loves Paris, but who is interested in Breslau, let alone Wroclaw? A detailed description of the strange charm of the cemetery in Cosel, the exquisite beauty of the abattoir in Ulica Legnica and its surroundings, the splendour of the ruins at the Neumarkt, or the fascination of the desert south of Gartenstrasse would probably create the effect the Spaniards call *contraproducente*. I did see the sights, but the written word does not seem an adequate means of communication in this context; a film using the flashback technique would perhaps be more appropriate and more convincing.

The *Monopol* had been the best hotel since the turn of the century; it still is, though its name is somewhat provocative for a hotel in a communist country. After 1945 its reputation for bad service became legendary; one day even an otherwise unflappable British ambassador is said to have shown signs of annoyance. It is much better now; a local wit maintains that a few waiters were shot *pour encourager les autres*. It would be almost perfect if only Polish economic planning had made provision for the manufacture of sleepable beds.

To the right of the hotel there was, and is, a big open square, which has changed its name and function several times during the last hundred years. In the 19th century the local garrison held its exercises here. Subsequently agricultural machinery was sold, and still later Adolf Hitler used to address mass meetings from the ramp of the castle on the north side of the square. The castle was destroyed but the square is decorated with little red-and-white flags and it is full of people; a Polish military band plays marches: it is the 18th anniversary of the capitulation of Breslau. Beyond the square there were the enormous courtyards and warehouses built in the 18th century; Breslau was then a big centre for trade with the East. The houses now look shabbier and more dilapidated, there is little trade, and children play where carriages and trucks once unloaded enormous bales of cotton and other large freight. It used to be a very orderly city, the tanners had their own little street, and so did the coppersmiths and also the prostitutes; Krullstrasse lies in ruins, is uninhabited and cordoned off—one cannot even enter it by car. This is the very centre of the town—there are old churches, old inns, most of them in ruins now; whole streets have disappeared, but the house where we lived for some years in the 'thirties still stands. I had always thought of it as rather small, dark, and in no way distinguished. Now it looks much brighter and most imposing, because so many buildings in the neighbourhood have disappeared. It has become something of a national monument, because it was designed by Langhans the younger, the architect who built the Brandenburg gate in Berlin. Someone looks down at me from our old flat; he must be the "specialist in nervous diseases," who, according to the doorplate downstairs, now lives there. Business appears to be slack; Wroclaw's new residents seem to be people with iron nerves.

It used to take me twenty minutes to reach school; it should have been half the time, I realise now, but there were so many distractions.

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Alas, I can't see any now. Half the buildings have come down, most of the shops have disappeared. There is hardly any traffic at all in the side-streets of most Polish cities, all the life is concentrated in the main thoroughfares. The school is there all right, a very ordinary grey building, smaller than it appeared to me in memory. It is still a school—the Wroclaw Economic High School. Overcoming some strange fear of authority (these things, it seems, last forever) I ventured into the building. The teachers' rest-room still gives comfort to tired lecturers, but the coloured glass panel commemorating those fallen in World War I (*dulce et decorum est...*) has been removed. The little shops nearby which sold exercise books, toy guns, sweets, and buttermilk have disappeared; there are heaps of coal in the street, an execrable but widespread custom in Polish cities.

I only dimly remember the other things I saw on this day; there were some surprises but no major shocks, one got accustomed to the different character of the town. I went to see Wertheim's, once the big department store, and the city's most modern building, now the *Powszechny Dom Towarowy* (the leading state chain-store). When it was established in 1930 the small businessmen made a terrible fuss; they were going to lose their custom, they said, and they threatened to support the Nazis (which I suppose in the end they did). The outcry was not worth while; after 1933 the place was "aryanised"; in 1945 they "polonised" the store and very faithfully rebuilt it. The selection and the display compare favourably with Moscow; there are good inexpensive cigars and a lot of well-made (and highly priced) motor cycles. In the olden days prospective customers were invited to taste the products of new baking mixes and custard powders and what not. The new régimes in Eastern Europe do not believe in free samples; the customer must not be spoiled. I went to see the hospital near the big water-tower in the south. A doctor had decided one day long ago that I would be better off without tonsils; he was right, I suppose, but the timing was all wrong. Some slight complication developed, I had to stay a few days longer than planned. It was September 25th, 1938; Chamberlain had just returned from Bad Godesberg to London; war seemed imminent. Never had I felt so helpless, it was like being in a mouse-trap about to close. The news over the loud-speaker that agreement had been reached came as a tremendous relief. I certainly was a Municheer on that evening and I do not repent. I went to see the Cathedral which, dating back to the 13th century, was largely destroyed in the last war but has been re-built by the Poles. There were groups of sightseers; the new Silesians are certainly eager to know their new homeland and to grow roots. There is the university on the other side of the river; nothing much has changed there. The new dean, recently elected, is himself a graduate of the university.

HOW CURIOUS that while trying to eradicate all traces of the German tradition, the Poles should in some ways be so eager to continue where the Germans left off. The original function and character of many shops, public buildings, institutions, has been preserved. The place where I got my first spectacles still sells them and the C & A shop opposite has merely given way to the Polish "state trust," selling coats and trousers.

An old aunt was bound to ask me what became of the *Jahrhunderthalle*, so I went to see it too. It was built in 1913, in commemoration of the war against Napoleon a hundred years earlier; at the time it was one of the world's seven wonders, a building of concrete and iron covering 10,000 square metres. Gerhard Hauptmann wrote a bad play for its opening; there was also an enormous orchestra and choir of a thousand. Now they call it Hala Ludowa; it houses a cinema, the biggest in Poland. Not far off the Oder steamers anchored on their run up river. On sunny summer afternoons the ships were full, the families went to a big open-air restaurant some miles away, where they spent a few hours by the river, fighting off the gnats, eating huge pieces of cake and drinking lemonade. There were small motor-boats and canoes, and people in all sorts of bathing costumes. The little orchestra played *"Nun ade, du mein lieb Heimatland"* as the steamer left for the city once again. How peaceful it all seemed. One Sunday evening in 1932, on our way back, a swimmer clambered on to the ship and wiped his bottom with the Black-Red-Gold flag of the Weimar republic. There was a roar of laughter; few of the passengers thought much of the flag. The tranquillity was deceptive.

I WAS NOT EAGER to mention the fact that I was born in Breslau, for whenever a Pole heard about it there was the inevitable question: "And how do you find the city now?" It was

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a question I would have preferred not to answer; it involved comparing two different peoples, cultures, ways of life, political régimes, and going on to pass value judgments. German Breslau was not only a bigger city than Polish Wroclaw, it was more orderly and prosperous, it had a culture of its own and a certain character. But is it fair to compare the toughs from Carpathian mountain villages who now lounge about the *Blücherplatz* with the local intelligentsia of 1910 (or 1930) assembled in the *Café Fahrig* after an evening at the opera? German Breslau was not only efficiency, *Gemütlichkeit*, and culture. The head of one of the West German refugee organisations said the other day that most of his compatriots who now visit Wroclaw are not really qualified to judge the present state of the city because they had not known the place in the old days. Maybe so, but what past does he have in mind? 1910 or 1938—or perhaps April, 1945? Does he remember only the Fair on the Eve of St. John? Or also the infamous guillotine in the local Gestapo prison? The frenetic applause when Hitler came to watch the gymnasts in 1938? The deportation and murder of thousands of Jews? The rowdy student demonstrations (Middle Eastern style) against professors who did not display enough enthusiasm for the Nazi cause? "Temporary aberrations," some will say; German history does not begin with Hitler, nor does it end with him. True enough, but for such historic aberrations nations pay dearly.

There is a great and growing literature on the new Wroclaw and I had bought in Warsaw some of the more important publications: the urban survey of 1956, the development plan for the city published in 1961, and Irene Turnau's investigation into the social composition of the new population. They all help one to understand the present state of affairs—but only up to a point. The cultural and social differences between the planners and many of the local population are simply too great. They have helped to clean up the shambles and to get the factories working again. Their children or grandchildren may make Wroclaw a modern city which is more than a conglomeration of factories, shops, and schools. It must have been a dreadful place in the early 'fifties; even the most orthodox party members tell you that life was grim in those days. The reconstruction of the city had not yet got under way, but a local underworld had developed—drunks, prostitutes, and terrifying criminals. There was nowhere to go in the evening, the general mood was one of gloom and despondency. After October, 1956, conditions improved owing to the general changes that took place in Poland, but also owing to an able local leadership. Matwin, the party secretary and a liberal by East European standards, has done much to improve living conditions and is genuinely popular; so is Mayor Iwaszkiewicz, a former mathematics professor. The number of inhabitants, less than 200,000 in 1946, is now up to about 450,000; it is expected to reach the half million mark in a year or two, and, according to the overall plan, 700,000 in 1985. (It was 625,000 in 1939.) The central city square with its baroque *Bürgerhäuser* has been most faithfully reconstructed, with its gables, portals, and richly decorated attics. The Gothic town hall has been repaired, and with its triangular gable towers, its turrets and sculptural ornaments, is still one of the noblest monuments of Gothic architecture in Europe. There are 30 bookshops, 27 pharmacies, 23 cinemas, 6 theatres (counting the opera), and 650 taxicabs (of which 90 per cent are privately owned). Some of the shops, too, are still in private hands, and about 15 per cent of the smaller workshops. The cinemas show films from all over the world; the mark of *"Zorro"* on the town hall showed the progress of Western civilisation. A lethargic elephant in the Zoological Garden may be one of the few survivors from the German era. Perhaps the S.S. omitted to kill him in the last days of the siege. Thirty-seven per cent of the population of Wroclaw are engaged in industry; employment in machine industry has gone up, in textile plants it has gone down. Public transport is mainly by a noisy and not very fast tramway service and no radical change is envisaged for the future; I am not a city planner but I foresee certain difficulties. Few people want to live in the inner part of the city; the local intelligentsia lives in such suburbs as Biskupin, or Oporów. There are museums, milkbars, and a number of new, very big, and always overcrowded coffee-houses around Kociuszko Square; old General Tauentzien, one of Frederick the Great's paladins, who is buried there, had to give way. There is an International Press and Book Club where the *New York Times* and the *Herald-Tribune* are sold, sometimes with only three days' delay (the British press seems in less demand); there are even a few filling stations though it takes some effort to find them. According to the city plan the destroyed quarters in the south of the city will be

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rebuilt in the next few years; I saw a few surveyors at work. There are many schools; Polish Silesia is demographically a very young country; there are more schoolchildren now in Wroclaw than there were in Breslau.

All this does not sound too bad. It is a real achievement, considering that the Poles started from very nearly nil in 1945. In Silesia the Poles not merely want to make their own lives more tolerable, they want to show the Germans that they are capable of building a city as well as, if not better than, the Germans.

ONE EVENING last autumn during an interval at a conference near Athens, the conversation turned to "the need for roots." We were eight around the table, and it emerged that none of us lived where we were born and that only one would be able to see again the parental home if he went back to his birthplace. (This was a girl who came from a small North Italian village that had been by-passed by the war.) The destruction of houses and the uprooting of many millions of people has been a commonplace on the continent of Europe in our time, and not only there. I envy those who survive and manage never to look back; from the point of view of mental hygiene I suppose it is the right thing to do. I was glad, nevertheless, that I had come back to my native city despite the unquiet memories. I was even more glad when the visit came to an end. Wroclaw is now very much a going concern; the recent protests in the West German *Bundestag* against a documentary film showing the new realities will do no good. I do not doubt that, as a new Polish guide to Wroclaw says, the new citizens have become attached to the town in the pioneering days among the ruins and the wreckage left by the war.

In a few decades the city may be among the finest in Poland; to-day much imagination and goodwill is still needed to envisage such a prospect. The importance that Breslau had in the 19th and early 20th centuries will hardly be regained, if only for the reason that the city was then part of the leading country in Central Europe; the language spoken in Breslau was the lingua franca of all Central, Eastern and South-eastern Europe. All this is gone and past help; it should be also past grief. It is also, as far as I am concerned, past personal interest. I will not deny that I was excited when the train that was bringing me to Wroclaw entered its suburbs, and for the benefit of my wife I gave a running commentary from the open window interrupted only by exclamations. But when we entered the train that was about to leave the city in the early hours of the morning, I took no "last look." I went into my empty compartment and almost immediately fell asleep. An utterly confused dream is all I can remember: *"Deutschland, Deutschland über Alles,"* played by an enormous brass orchestra, directed by a gentleman in very old-fashioned attire; it must have been my Breslau neighbour, Hoffman von Fallersleben, who wrote the text. Yet the German anthem was soon drowned out by *"Jeszcze Polska nie zginela,"* played by a group of ladies and gentlemen looking even more anachronistic. The trumpets sounded a well-known march: "Poland has not yet perished. March, March Dombrowski." Among the musicians one excelled, Jankiel the honest Jew, about whom I only know that he was the best performer with the dulcimer at *Pan Tadeusz'* marriage. Yet even this touching scene did not last long. The Poles disappeared as on a revolving stage, a calm, measured voice came in, announcing that this was a fine morning in London, and that a gentleman in Asmara had asked the B.B.C. General Overseas Service to play *"Abdul, the Bulbul Emir."* And so to this cheerful tune the East European confusion dissolved and gave way to British certainties. I reached out and turned the dial of the little radio. The train had just passed Opola (Oppeln). I had left my native city for the second and, I suppose, last time in my life.

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W. H. Auden

The Cave of Nakedness

(*For Louis and Emmie Kronenberger*)

Don Juan needs no bed, being far too impatient to undress,
nor do Tristan and Isolda, much too in love to think
of so mundane a matter, but unmythical
mortals require one and prefer to take their clothes off,
if only to sleep. That is why bedroom farces
must be incredible to be funny, why Peeping Toms
are never praised, like novelists or bird-watchers,
for their keeness of observation: where there's a bed,
be it a nun's restricted cot or an Emperor's
baldachined and nightly-redamselled couch, there are no
effable data. (Our dreams may be recounted,
but our deeds of arrantry in the wilderness of wish
so often turn out, when told, to be less romantic
than our day's routine: besides, we cannot describe them
without faking.) Lovers don't see their embraces
as a viable theme for debate, nor a monk his prayers
(do they, in fact, remember them?): O's of passion,
interior acts of attention, not being a story
in which the names don't matter but the way of telling,
with a lawyer's wit or a nobleman's assurance,
does, need a drawing-room of their own. Bed-sitting-rooms
soon drive us crazy, a dormitory even sooner
turns us to brutes: bona fide architects know
that doors are not emphatic enough and interpose,
as a march between two realms, so alien, so disjunct,
the no-man's-land of a stair. The switch from personage,
with a state number, a first and family name,
to the naked Adam or Eve, and vice versa,
should not be off-hand or abrupt; a stair retards it
to a solemn procession.
Since my infantile entrance
at my mother's bidding into Edwardian England,
I have suffered the transit over forty thousand times,
usually, to my chagrin, by myself; about
blended flesh, those midnight colloquia of Darbies and Joans,
I know nothing, therefore, about certain occult
antipathies perhaps too much. Some perks belong, though,
to all unwilling celibates; our rooms are seldom
battlefields, we enjoy the pleasure of reading in bed
(as we grow older, it's true, we may find it prudent
to go nodding drunk first), we retain the right to choose
our sacred image.(That I often start with sundry
splendours at sundry times greened after, but always end
aware of one, the same one, may be of no importance,
but I hope it is.) Ordinary human unhappiness
is life in its natural colour, to cavil

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putting on airs: at day-wester to think of nothing
benign to memorise is as rare as feeling
no personal blemish, and Age, despite its damage,
is well off. When they look in their bedroom mirrors,
Fifty-plus may be bored but Seventeen is faced by
a frowning failure, with no money, no mistress,
no manner of his own, who never got to Italy
nor met a great one: to say a few words at banquets,
to attend a cocktail party in honour of N or M,
can be severe, but Junior has daily to cope
with ghastly family meals, with dear papa and mama
being odd in the wrong way. (It annoys him to speak,
and it hurts him not to.)
When I disband from the world
and entrust my future to the Gospel-Makers,
I need not fear (not in neutral Austria) being called for
in the waist of the night by deaf agents, never
to be heard of on earth again: the assaults I would be spared
are none of them princely, fire, nightmare, insomnia's
Vision of Hell, when Nature's wholesome genial fabric
lies utterly discussed and from a sullen vague
wafts a contagious stench, her adamant minerals
all corrupt, each life a worthless iteration
of the general loathing. (To know that, probably,
its cause is chemical can degrade the panic,
not stint it.) As a rule, with pills to help them, the Holy Four
exempt my nights from nuisance and even wake me
when I would be woken, when, audible here and there
in the half-dark, members of an avian orchestra
are already softly noodling, limbering up for
an overture at sunrise, their effort to express
in the old convention they inherit that joy in beginning
for which our species was created and declare it
good.
We may not be obliged—though it is mannerly—to bless
The Trinity that we are corporal contraptions,
but only a villain will omit to thank Our Lady or
her hen-wife, Dame Kind, as he, she, or both ensemble,
emerge from a private cavity to be re-born,
re-neighboured in the Country of Consideration.

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John Maynard Keynes

By Robert Lekachman

"He taught men to unite reason with hope . . ."
HUGH DALTON

"Inflation is unjust and Deflation is inexpedient. Of the two perhaps Deflation is, if we rule out exaggerated inflations such as that of Germany, the worse; because it is worse, in an impoverished world, to provoke unemployment than to disappoint the rentier." KEYNES

IN THE GLANCE into the future that Keynes took in 1930 in his "Economic Possibilities for our Grandchildren", he had this to say about economics and economists:

> Do not let us overestimate the importance of the economic problem, or sacrifice to its supposed necessities other matters of greater and more permanent significance. It should be a matter for specialists, like dentistry. If economists could manage to get themselves thought of as humble, competent people on a level with dentists, that would be splendid!

Dentists may or may not be humble souls, and by all accounts Keynes himself aspired to virtues other than humility. All the same, the remark has its resonances in Keynes' public attitudes and intellectual strategies. The Keynes who had argued so hard during the 1920s against the Treasury view of unemployment and public works expenditures longed to convert his antagonists by persuading them that their reasoning was faulty and their techniques irrelevant. Neither malign ideology nor class selfishness was at the root of their stubbornness. "Muddle": that was the trouble. At the outset of the Great Depression, Keynes declared:

> . . . to-day we have involved ourselves in a colossal muddle, having blundered in the control of a delicate machine, the working of which we do not understand.

Keynesian politics are the politics of the excluded muddle, of better understanding, of technical responses to technical exigencies.

Such politics do not readily triumph. During the 1920s and earlier the orthodox British Treasury opinion about the efficacy of government deficit expenditures held, in the words of the 1929 Chancellor of the Exchequer:

> that whatever might be the political or social advantages, very little additional employment and no permanent additional employment can, in fact, and as a general rule, be created by State borrowing and State expenditure.

It is a matter of record that this peculiar doctrine, which implied the existence of something like a fixed capital fund very reminiscent of the classical economists' wages fund, dominated the policies equally of Conservative Chancellors of the Exchequer like Winston Churchill and Labour Chancellors like Philip Snowden. In 1930 Snowden was capable of arguing in a House of Commons debate that "an expenditure which may be easy and tolerable in prosperous times becomes intolerable in a time of grave industrial depression. . . ." Snowden's moral was equally banal: rigid economy was absolutely essential on pain of financial collapse. This was equally Herbert Hoover's conclusion and still more the conviction (1932) of Franklin Roosevelt who virtuously attacked Hoover for his failure to balance the budget: "Let us have the courage to stop borrowing to meet continuing deficits. Stop the deficits." Thus Labour govern-

JOHN MAYNARD KEYNES *was born in Cambridge 80 years ago. When he died in 1946, the Western world was on the verge of the dramatic recognition that here was, like Marx, an economist and a prophet whose ideas were changing the world. The author of this analysis of "The Keynesian Revolution" is Professor of Economics at Barnard College, Columbia University.*

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ments which drew their support from the mines and the factories were compelled by received economic doctrine to curtail even the meagre existing amounts of unemployment benefits and to abstain totally from bolder programmes of public spending.

KEYNES' ASSAULT on such opinions began with an analogy: if the Treasury's view were correct, then "it must apply equally to a new works started by Morris or Courtaulds, to any new business enterprise entailing capital expenditure." Something must be wrong, thought Keynes, since no one really believed that additional private capital expenditure was unproductive:

> If it were announced that some of our leading captains of industry had decided to launch out boldly and were about to sink capital in new industrial plant to the tune, between them, of £100 million, we should all expect to see a great improvement in employment. And, of course, we should be right.

Yet, Keynes wondered, did not the capitalists just as surely divert funds from other productive enterprises as any government which undertook to expand its own expenditure? At the least the Treasury view lacked common sense. Moreover, it neglected the circumstance that there were sources of finance readily available which were perfectly capable of expanding total production, not merely altering its composition. For the savings now being paid to the unemployed as benefits to sustain them in idleness could equally be used to "equip the country." Or net foreign lending could be reduced and the funds so diverted devoted to domestic expenditure. As Keynes concluded his case,

> ... we are left with a broad, simple, and surely incontestable proposition. Whatever real difficulties there may be in the way of absorbing our unemployed labour in productive work, an inevitable diversion of resources from other forms of employment is not one of them.

KEYNES' ASSAULT was sensible enough, but it failed to convert the bureaucrats. Indeed Keynes was not even able to persuade substantial numbers of economists that his heterodox opinions were worthy of adoption. What the profession awaited before it would believe in the special efficacy of fiscal policy was the placement of this policy within the framework of a satisfactory theory of aggregate employment and aggregate economic activity.

No doubt an impatient Keynes exaggerated the degree to which his predecessors and associates had failed to grapple with such variables. For one, his friend, colleague, and ultimate critic Sir Dennis Robertson had (as early as his 1915 *Study of Industrial Fluctuation*) assumed the importance and gravity of fluctuations in employment and output. And Robertson's *Banking Policy and the Price Level* (1926) had attempted a synthesis of monetary and business cycle theory which contained many "Keynesian" elements. But Keynes' exaggeration of his own solitude pointed to the truth that economists who lacked a consistent theory of income and employment were ill-equipped to advocate consistent remedies for deficient income and inadequate employment.

Thus the years which preceded the appearance of the *General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* in 1935 were for Keynes, a man apprenticed to practical economic problems, "a struggle of escape from habitual modes of thought and expression." These habitual modes of thought and expression were nothing less than the terminology and the assumptions of Alfred Marshall and Marshall's successor in the Cambridge Chair of Economics, A. C. Pigou. It was a struggle which occurred in the context of a Cambridge to which Keynes belonged by birth, education, intellectual affiliation, and personal sentiment. For an American it is not always easy to believe in the overwhelming significance of schools and universities in the lives of influential Englishmen, if for no other reasons than that few Americans attend boarding schools, many reside at home even during their university years, and even "Harvard" conveys meanings less portentous than "Oxbridge."

MUCH IN KEYNES' LIFE testified to the influence of Cambridge. His father, John Neville Keynes, held the position of Registrary of Cambridge; his mother, active in Cambridge affairs, served a term as the city's mayor. Keynes himself was not only a member of the educated bourgeoisie of the Cambridge subspecies, he knew where he belonged.[1] In 1925 when he asked himself, "Ought I, then, to join the Labour Party?" he answered the question negatively. For the

[1] Keynes belonged not only to the Cambridge of the economists but also to the Cambridge which fostered Bloomsbury. Not that Bloomsbury did not at times doubt the full credentials of this man of affairs. Bell thought that Keynes "had very little natural feeling for the arts; though he learned to write admirably lucid prose...." He recalls Lytton Strachey remarking, "What's wrong with Pozzo is that he has no æsthetic sense." Pozzo was a "pet name for Maynard which Maynard particularly disliked."

As First Bursar of King's College (from 1924) Keynes pursued so active an investment policy that £30,000 of unrestricted funds which he found at the outset of his tenure had appreciated to £380,000 by the time of his death.

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Labour Party struck him as a "class party, and the class is not my class."

"If," said Keynes, "I am going to pursue sectional interests at all, I shall pursue my own. . . . I can be influenced by what seems to me to be Justice and good sense; but the *Class* war will find me on the side of the educated *bourgeoisie*." His ultimate adverse judgment upon the Labour Party was based on his disbelief that "the intellectual elements in the Labour Party will ever exercise adequate control."

Cambridge must have helped to form the rationalist in Keynes and the anarchist as well. At King's, Keynes came under the influence of G. E. Moore and into the association of Lytton Strachey ("a Voltairean"), Leonard Woolf ("a rabbi"), Clive Bell ("a gay and amiable dog"),[2] R. G. Hawtrey ("a dogmatist"), and, much less frequently, E. M. Forster. Moore's *Principia Ethica* was published at the close of Keynes' first Cambridge year, 1902, and "the talk which preceded and followed it, dominated, and perhaps still dominates, everything else." What Keynes found attractive in Moore's view of the worlds is suggested in this passage from his "My Early Beliefs":

> Nothing mattered except states of mind, our own and other people's of course, but chiefly our own. These states of mind were not associated with action or achievement or with consequence. They consisted in timeless, passionate states of contemplation and communion, largely unattached to "before" and "after." Their value depended, in accordance with the principle of organic unity, on the state of affairs as a whole which could not be usefully analysed into parts. For example, the value of the state of mind of being in love did not depend merely on the nature of one's own emotions, but also on the worth of their object and on the reciprocity and nature of the object's emotions; but it did not depend, if I remember rightly, or did not depend much, on what happened, or how one felt about it, a year later, though I myself was always an advocate of a principle of organic unity through time, which still seems to me only sensible. The appropriate subjects of passionate contemplation and communion were a beloved person, beauty and truth, and one's prime objects in life were love, the creation and enjoyment of esthetic experience and the pursuit of knowledge. Of these love came a long way first.

[2] In his cool sketch of Keynes in *Old Friends*, Clive Bell takes some issue with Keynes' recollections of the time of their meeting as well as the closeness of their University relationship. Keynes' memories are in his "My Early Beliefs" (1938). As Clive Bell recalls his friend, "Maynard laid down the law on all subjects. . . . Cocksureness was his besetting sin, if sin it can be called." But Bell also observes: ". . . his dearest friends he loved passionately and faithfully and, odd as it may sound, with a touch of humility."

The passage, the influence, and the friends explain something of that passionate individualism in Keynes which made it natural for him during the First World War to declare himself a conscientious objector to conscription on the premise that the state had no business telling its citizens when to fight. Perhaps they explain also a curious conception of political processes which often took the shape of excessive confidence in the power of argument to transform party and national policy. The year is 1930 and Keynes is casting about for ways of combating unemployment. Up to this time his record as a free trader has been "without blemish." Here is Harrod's sequel:

> Keynes came during this year to address an undergraduate economic society in Oxford and stayed with me. . . . He told me that he intended to give us an address in favour of a revenue tariff. My face fell, and I uttered some words of deprecation. He made haste to console me. It would be all right, he assured me, because when the present phase had passed, we should return to Free Trade.

Keynes had changed his mind before and he was destined to change it again. Allied revision of reparations policy was strongly influenced by Keynesian polemics against Versailles. Parliamentary systems are more flexible than presidential systems. Still, it takes a deal of confidence in the power of reason to believe that tariffs once levied are readily to be lifted.

YET IN THE MAJOR WORK of his life Keynes' faith in argument achieved its justification. For the composition and the dissemination of the *General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* are twin triumphs of reason. It is a fair claim that this abstruse, stylistically uneven, occasionally wilfully confusing volume—addressed to economists only—is unique in the record of that peculiarly British subject, "political economy." No doubt educated men, even politicians, read the *Wealth of Nations* and respected its arguments. Indeed, if they were truly cultivated, they had come across the essentials of Smith's demonstration of the virtues of natural liberty in David Hume's *Political Discourses*, written two decades or more earlier. But mercantilism did not vanish in the wake of Smith's exposé of the "mercantile system", free trade had to await the repeal of the Corn Laws (1846), Speenhamland in 1795 and the Combination Acts in 1799 echoed no Smithian world view, and it remained for David Ricardo's *Principles of Political Economy and Taxation* (1817) to join an intellectually respectable technique to Smith's vision of economic freedom.

Stanley Jevons' independent discovery of the

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marginalist doctrine of value in 1870 (more or less coincidently with Walras in France and Menger in Germany) failed to overturn Ricardian economics and the classical pain-cost doctrine of value. In fact, as Jevons bitterly complained, he was compelled to teach his Manchester pupils Mill's version of the older economics in order to get them through their examinations. "Marginalism" became respectable in England when that archetypical insider, Alfred Marshall, released his magisterial *Principles of Economics* in 1890. The *Principles* was a reverent volume which emphasised the continuity rather than the discontinuity of economic doctrine. Even so, Marshall's quiet revolution was essentially a matter of technique rather than of economic policy—for wage reductions as cures for unemployment can be recommended with equal vigour by good Ricardian adherents to the doctrine of the wages fund *and* by good marginalist devotees of wage determination according to the economic contributions of labourers.

There was very little that practical men of affairs either in business or politics had to do differently because Marshall had superseded Ricardo and Mill.

It is the measure of Keynes' triumph that he mounted a successful assault upon an ancient set of doctrines and an equally venerable conception of respectable public policy. And the languid, intellectually sterile atmosphere of the 1930s conspired to hasten the acceptance of the Keynesian revelation. The late Joseph A. Schumpeter, no Keynesian, called "the success of the *General Theory* . . . instantaneous . . . and . . . sustained." Paul Samuelson declared that "the *General Theory* caught most economists under the age of thirty-five with the unexpected virulence of a disease first attacking and decimating an isolated tribe of South Sea islanders." "Economists beyond fifty," Samuelson went on, "turned out to be quite immune to the ailment." And the many hostile reviews—some by men under fifty—availed their writers little, for within a decade the *General Theory* had won the battle of the text-books and within fifteen years its doctrines were the staple of beginning economics instruction. In the United States *all* the leading introductory text-books of the 1950s and the 1960s have been Keynesian at least in the sense that a good half of their analytical sections is devoted to Keynesian "macro-economics"—the definition, measurement, and determination of national income and its attendant variables, consumption, saving, and investment.[3] For most students marginalist explanations of commodity pricing and income distribution are the less interesting half of their course.

Somewhat belatedly, perhaps, the 1936 Keynes has even achieved the 1963 adherence of an American President and his (Republican) Secretary of the Treasury. It is hard to know whether to laugh or cry at the fact that Mr. Kennedy's 1963 Federal Budget marks the *first* peacetime occasion on which an American government has deliberately predicted a budget deficit, patiently explained the deficit's desirability as a conscious policy of economic expansion, and embraced fiscal policy more generally as a technique of public administration. The cries from the country's legislative cavemen have been reverberating through the Halls of Congress ever since. For there remain places in the United States where Keynes is still a radical Englishman with designs upon the Puritan Ethic.

HOW RADICAL was he?

As far as technique and mode of arrangement are concerned, Keynes conserved as much as he could of what he had learned from his masters. The student of Marshall and Pigou who absorbed from them the subtleties of price determination in markets of various kinds did not discard this geometry of demonstration simply because he placed different labels on the axes (or indeed failed to draw the diagrams) and explained not how individual prices were set but how savings and investments were brought to equality. The neophyte who finally grasps the significance of "equilibrium at the level of income which corresponds to the intersection of aggregate demand and aggregate supply" has learned a lesson in the application of Marshall's technique to Keynes' problems.[4] And the mode of argument, full though it is of verbal pyrotechniques, still faithfully reflects these characteristics at the least of the Cambridge economists: simplifying assumptions are freely made. (In the most heroic of them Keynes takes "as given the existing skill and quantity of available labour, the existing quality and quantity of available equipment, the existing technique, the degree of competition, the tastes and habits of the consumer, the disutility of different intensities of labour

[3] The point is one of emphasis. Keynes did not invent economic aggregates nor quite ignore individual prices. His strategy struck at the implicit assumption of his intellectual opponents that the aggregates could care for themselves if only businessmen and labourers behaved properly.

[4] Even if the beginner retreats baffled by plane geometry, he can scarcely avoid absorbing a beneficial conclusion, that economic equilibrium and high unemployment are perfectly consistent phenomena, frequently to be met in the real world. This is not the least of Keynes' triumphs: the marriage of that OK word "equilibrium" with the distasteful presence of unemployment.

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and of the activities of supervision and organisation, as well as the social structure including the forces... which determine the distribution of national income.") Introspection is a faithful ally ("the fundamental psychological law, upon which we are entitled to depend with great confidence both *a priori* from our knowledge of human nature and from the detailed facts of experience, is that men are disposed, as a rule and on the average, to increase their consumption as their income increases, but not by as much as the increase in their income"). The analogies to classical mechanics upon which equilibrium analysis rests are retained ("the volume of employment is determined by the point of intersection of the aggregate supply function with the aggregate demand function"). And the institutional structure of Western capitalism is taken for granted in the main structure of the theory, if not in the *obiter dicta* and in Chapter 24.[5]

[5] Here indeed is the main occasion of the Marxist criticism of Keynesian economics. Thus in the course of a graceful obituary, Paul Sweezy characterised Keynes' defects as: "... the shortcomings of bourgeois thought in general: the unwillingness to view the economy as an integral part of a social world; the inability to see the present as history, to understand that the disasters and catastrophes amidst which we live are not simply a 'frightful muddle' but are the direct and inevitable product of a social system which has exhausted its creative power." Still more typically Paul Baran has called Keynesian economics "merely a supreme effort on the part of bourgeois economic thought to discover a way of saving the capitalist system in spite of the manifest symptoms of its disintegration and decay."

[6] In Ricardo's formulation, Say's Law read like this: "No man produces but with a view to consume or sell, and he never sells but with an intention to purchase some other commodity.... By purchasing them, he necessarily becomes either the consumer of his own goods, or the purchaser and the consumer of the goods of some other person. ... Productions are always bought by productions, or by services...."

[7] As Keynes himself noted, his use of "classical" confuses:

> "The classical economists was a name invented by Marx to cover Ricardo and James Mill and their *predecessors,* that is to say for the founders of the theory which culminated in the Ricardian economics. I have become accustomed, perhaps perpetrating a solecism, to include in 'the classical economists' the *followers* of Ricardo, those, that is to say, who adopted and perfected the theory of the Ricardian economics, including (for example) J. S. Mill, Marshall, Edgeworth and Prof. Pigou."

Since by 1936 "classical" was as much epithet as identification, Keynes derived obvious semantic advantages from his use of the term.

As AN ECONOMIC THEORIST Keynes' radicalism consisted largely in his choice of topics and variables. Most directly Keynes was a radical economic theorist because he placed employment at the *centre* of his macro-economics in place of price levels. And he behaved still more dangerously when he insisted upon the primacy of macro-economics and the subordinate position of micro-economics. These bold initiatives in turn depended upon the demolition of Say's Law,[6] the durable generalisation which denied that in competitive markets general "glut" or involuntary unemployment could occur. Keynes' polemic extended from Say's Law to A. C. Pigou's highly sophisticated adaptation of Say in his *Theory of Unemployment.*

There is more or less general agreement among economists that Keynes treated Pigou roughly and, possibly, unfairly. Nevertheless, the lasting theoretical as well as the immediate practical significance of the *General Theory* is to be found in Keynes' destruction of this "classical"[7] bogey and his demonstration that general glut and involuntary unemployment are perfectly explicable on theoretical grounds as the usual condition of economic affairs. It is paradoxical that this crucial piece of analysis is extraordinarily difficult to untangle. Keynes started by defining the premises which underlay the "classical" proposition that in competitive labour markets and competitive commodity markets a wage reduction expanded employment and a larger wage reduction expanded employment still further. Such propositions supported the still larger conclusion that aside from temporary, frictional pauses between jobs involuntary unemployment could not exist: there was always some wage rate, however low, which corresponded to full employment.

The first "classical" wage theorem, then, amounted to no more than the statement that "the wage is equal to the marginal product of labour," or, in plainer English, the selling price of a worker's output for the period covered by his wage. So far, said Keynes, acceptable. What about the second "classical" theorem? "The utility of the wage when a given volume of labour is employed is equal to the marginal disutility of that amount of employment." This is a mode of re-stating a number of Benthamite propositions:

1. Work is painful
2. Additional work becomes more painful hour by hour
3. Wages please because they command pleasurable objects and services
4. But additional wages yield less pleasure, dollar by dollar, than their predecessors because they gratify tastes of diminishing intensity
5. Hence any work will offer his services only

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> as long as the pleasure he anticipates from his additional earnings exceeds the pain from his additional labour. In any market situation he will cease to work just before the point where additional pains match additional pleasures.

Now this marginalist extension of Bentham also implies that an individual can increase his own employment if he so revises his computation of pleasure and pain as to work more hours at existing wage rates, the same number at lower wage rates, or exchanges employment for idleness at a wage rate which he had previously esteemed unacceptable. Hence when actual unemployment characterises labour markets the fully or the partially unemployed can remedy their condition by accepting wage reductions. It follows that a situation of general unemployment must be regarded as the outcome of voluntary choices on the part of the unemployed. Although these choices may be defensible on social and historical grounds, they are not to be confused with involuntary unemployment.

It is probably just as well that ordinary citizens during the years of the Great Depression were spared full expositions of this variety. Even the vulgarisations of this doctrine which filtered down to the general public could scarcely have enhanced the public regard for economics.[8] As far as anyone could see, the experts had not advanced beyond the austere advice of *The Economist* in 1863 to the Lancashire operatives:

> No man or woman has a right to ask or has reason to expect to be paid at the same rate for their labour, when there are 250,000 operatives out of work, as when all are fully employed. No man can expect that wages should be as high per day or per piece when trade is slack and losing, as when it is brisk and profitable. A lower rate of pay is the natural and inevitable result of the present state of the Lancashire labour market. . . . No operative who had refused work at *subsistence* wages ought to be held entitled to eleemosynary aid. . . .

This was still the theory, and in economics, as in other subjects, bad theory holds the ground until better theory displaces it, even in the face of the evidence that millions of the unemployed would have gladly accepted work at almost any rate above zero. Keynes' better theory emerged in one of the denser definitions of economics. Keynes' definition of involuntary unemployment was designed to demonstrate that the phenomenon did indeed exist and that because it existed workers might be unable to increase their own employment however the wage rate varied.

"Men," said Keynes, "are involuntarily unemployed if, in the event of a small rise in the price of wage-goods relatively to the money wage, both the aggregate supply of labour willing to work for the current money-wage and the aggregate demand for it at that wage would be greater than the existing volume of employment." Or, as a translation might put the matter: People must be involuntarily unemployed if, in the event of a rise in the cost of living and a consequent drop of real wages, employers seek to hire additional workers and these additional workers willingly present themselves to be hired. For if more people will gladly labour at *lower* real wages even an economist must admit that they must have been involuntarily unemployed beforehand when real wages were *higher*. Thus Keynes granted involuntary unemployment a theoretical licence to exist.[9]

IT IS DIFFICULT TO exaggerate the liberating effect of this reasoning. None too soon for economists, it resolved the contradiction between the evidence of their eyes that mass unemployment was not the choice of the unemployed and a theory which demanded the belief that mass unemployment was the consequence of individual reluctance to accept lower wages, trade union intransigence, business monopoly, or unsound public finance. The remainder of the Keynesian breakthrough by now is susceptible to trite summary:

1. The total spending of the community determines total employment and individual wage bargains have very little to do with total spending,
2. If government's rôle is neutral, total spending itself consists of consumption and investment,
3. Of the two investment is the dynamic and consumption is the passive element.

Governments can affect total spending and total employment either by:

1. Monetary policies which lower interest rates essentially by central banking operations designed to increase the supply of money, or by

[8] The ultimate vulgarisation is the conclusion that the unemployed were lazy, unenterprising, or both. The late Charles E. Wilson (Secretary of Defense during the Eisenhower Administrations) aptly expressed the sentiment when he declared his preference for hunting dogs over kennel dogs.

[9] The point is now so trite that it is difficult to believe how startling it once appeared to argue that unemployment is the result of deficient total demand for goods not of deficient character on the part of the unemployed. Simple enough, but in an *Observer* interview (June 9, 1963), Harold Wilson recalled that the late Lord Beveridge himself failed to grasp the point: "I remember his face, very puzzled, one day after he had visited a camp for unemployed men. He said he couldn't understand why decent, able-bodied men like the ones we had seen *could* be out of work. He didn't want to face the real problem. He wanted to think in terms of frictional unemployment."

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2. Fiscal policies which expand the volume of total spending by increasing public outlays without raising taxes or decreasing taxes without reducing public outlays.

Lower interest rates stimulate investors who are guided by comparisons between expected profits and borrowing costs. Fiscal policies enlarge private spending if taxes are reduced and public spending if public works and public subsidies are the preferred policies.

In proper combination such policies appear capable of restoring full employment. In reverse, they are capable of dampening inflation and checking overfull employment. But above all, they restore to politicians a sense of possibility in the handling of economic difficulty and to ordinary citizens the right to hold their elected leaders responsible for continued unemployment.

One obvious measure of Keynes' success is the inability of any government to approach a general election at a time of high unemployment with the plea that public policy is helpless to control the natural forces of the economic system.

ARE WE NOW in a post-Keynesian era? In America where Keynesianism has converted the academics (save those located in the University of Chicago and its outposts), the more sophisticated politicians, and the enlightened segment of business opinion represented by the Committee for Economic Development, the question naturally arises—as it must for Britain also—whether Keynesian doctrine of the essentially technical variety just described is adequate to the economic needs of capitalism a generation later than the *General Theory*. The programme of tax reductions and tax reforms which President Kennedy has been pressing upon a balky Congress—how he must envy a British Chancellor's power to reverse the economic engines in a single Budget Speech—actually extends the sphere of private activity and relatively diminishes that of the public sector, for it expands the spending ability of private consumers and private businessmen, not of federal instrumentalities.

If simple Keynesian fiscal policy were enough, such a programme should stimulate total spending, diminish unemployment, and restore the economy to something like full-capacity operation. Yet, few even of the Administration spokesmen believe that by itself fiscal policy will actually do the job. For the sad, uncomfortable fact may be that just about the time that the Keynesian revelation has at last won the hearts of businessmen and politicians, the nature of the economic problem has sufficiently changed to require different or, at the least, more complex remedies.

Here recent American experience is instructive. In the past five years (divided about equally between Republican and Democratic Administrations) unemployment has averaged 6 per cent. Between 1948 and 1958 the average duration of unemployment rose from 10·3 to 14·3 weeks. Between 1958 and 1962 the United States could probably have produced something like an additional $170 billion of merchandise and services in existing plants, with the assistance of available workers.

Aggregate demand may indeed have been deficient during this term of years, but, the experts agree, it has lost title as the single actor of the economic drama. Consider only six of the most popular "explanations" of American economic sluggishness.

1. *Gold drains* have compelled the American Administration to pursue policies less expansionary than domestic circumstances required.
2. *Unemployment* has been complicated by a spurt in the growth of the labour force. Expected to grow by some 1,200,000 in 1963, the labour force expanded at an average rate of only 70,000 during the 1950s.
3. *"Automation"* displaces workers more rapidly than economic expansion demands new workers. 1960's output of goods and services could have been comfortably produced in 1961 with 1·5 million fewer workers. "Automation" may or may not be a phenomenon qualitatively different from the technological changes of the last two hundred years, but different or similar, it aggravates employment policy.
4. Partly as the consequence of automation, partly as the effect of the continuing shift from manufacturing to the service trades, *unskilled and semi-skilled jobs* are becoming relatively scarce, and managerial, technical, and professional opportunities are expanding. The skills of the labour force do not match the new job specifications. Hence older workers require retraining and younger ones need different forms of vocational education. All workers would benefit from the general education and sophistication which facilitate jobs changes during their careers. (In the U.S. these adjustments are the more difficult because racial discrimination restricts both opportunities and education for the Negro and Puerto Rican population.)
5. *Large corporations* and *large unions* force prices and wages up far short of full employment. As a result, any Administration is compelled to switch from expansion to restriction well in advance of full employment. Unions force wages up more rapidly than productivity rises. Large concentrated corporations raise their prices at the breath of favourable business conditions and omit to lower them in recessions. Price stability in the United States

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may be purchasable only at 5–6 per cent levels of employment.

6. In the 1960s the U.S. is undergoing a recurrence of the problems of the 1930s which were postponed but not resolved by the Second World War and the consumption boom which followed it. In common with other mature societies, notably England, the U.S. is caught in a "contradiction" between the bounding forces of production and the feebler capacities to consume which a continuingly inegalitarian distribution of income renders inevitable. Under capitalism, deficiencies of aggregate demand are always either present or imminent. (A spate of recent American studies, notably those of Lampman, Miller, Harrington, and Kolko, have supported this proposition with evidence that the trend towards diminished inequality of income halted about the same time as the conclusion of the Second World War.)

WHAT IS NOTABLE about these varied explanations of the American situation is this: with the important exception of the last one, they have comparatively *little* to do with Keynesian diagnoses. The first argument is the venerable gold standard justification of internal deflation. In the 1960s its only novelty is contained in the fact that no nation is actually on the gold standard. Explanations 2, 3, and 4 are either connected with "accidental," temporary circumstances like unusual increases in the size of the labour force or with frictional impediments such as imperfections of labour market organisation. Number 5, the popular post-war emphasis upon cost-push inflation, bases itself on the behaviour of large economic units like the giant American corporation (in a good year General Motors sales are larger than the national income of Yugoslavia), or the huge trade unions. But, to say the least, such behaviour is imperfectly comprehended within the Keynesian conceptual framework and Keynes himself, by abstracting from the degree of competition, in effect denied its importance to his analysis.

It is the sixth account of American economic difficulty which is the most interesting, if not necessarily the most convincing. It echoes the still durable doctrine of secular stagnation, now in disrepute among most economists. Indeed, in the version which Alvin Hansen and his followers made familiar in the 1930s, secular stagnation is untenable as a hypothesis, for the "secular stagnationists" derived their predictions of (more or less) permanent inadequacies of aggregate demand from the "slow-down in population growth" (which summarised the demographic experience of the last part of the 19th and the first third of the 20th century). In the U.S. the 1950 and the 1960 Censuses put the quietus on this line of argument. But, shorn of its demography, secular stagnation is a convenient label for *any* persistent tendency of aggregate demand and aggregate supply to reach equilibrium at less than full employment levels of national income.

IT IS WORTH seeing how much in Keynes supports this more generalised version of secular stagnation. Plainly the Keynes who is now in vogue is an essentially *conservative* figure completely devoted to the proposition that the proper application of intelligent monetary and fiscal policies can maintain intact the current institutional arrangements of Western capitalism. Indeed, regarded solely as an analytical apparatus, Keynesian macro-economics plausibly supports such interpretations of Keynes' essential meaning.

All the same, there is *another* Keynes present both in the *General Theory* and in earlier writings. This is a less optimistic and a less capitalist Keynes. Certainly as early as 1920 and the *Economic Consequences of the Peace*, Keynes was already emphasising the fragility of capitalistic arrangements. As an example, here are his comments on the delicate balance of forces which facilitated the social harmonies of 1870–1914:

> While there was some continuous improvement in the daily conditions of life of the mass of the population, Society was so framed as to throw a great part of the increased income into the control of the class least likely to consume it.... This remarkable system depended for its growth on a double bluff of deception. On the one hand, the labouring classes accepted from ignorance or powerlessness, or were compelled, persuaded or cajoled by custom, convention, authority and the well-established order of Society into accepting a situation in which they and Nature and the capitalists were co-operating to produce. And on the other hand the capitalist classes were allowed to call the best part of the cake theirs and were theoretically free to consume it, on the tacit underlying condition that they consume very little of it in practice.

As Keynes described the operations of this system of "double bluff," a good deal depended upon the mystique of the gold standard and the astute, secretive central bankers who worked its controls. Much rested on a complex international division of labour which required comparatively free trade among the nations. The First World War slaughtered the gold standard, disrupted the international division of labour, and dealt a mortal blow to free trade. Probably it deranged the social harmonies into the bargain.

Keynes' anxious observation of English economic troubles during the 1920s led him in his *Treatise on Money* (1930) to diagnose England's economic ailment as "over-saving." In

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part, the difficulty was geriatric: "England is an old country.... The population will soon cease to grow. Our habits and institutions keep us, in spite of all claims to the contrary, a thrifty people." Now thrift in itself is not disastrous to full employment if its accompaniment is vigorous investment. Such indeed was the combination which explained for Keynes the economic successes of the period which preceded the First World War. But by the time Keynes came to write the *General Theory*, he had begun to question the plausibility of high investment:

> To-day and presumably for the future, the schedule of the marginal efficiency of capital is for a variety of reasons much lower than it was in the nineteenth century. The acuteness and the peculiarity of our contemporary problems arise, therefore, out of the possibility that the average rate of interest which will allow a reasonable average level of employment is one so unacceptable to wealth-owners that it cannot be readily established by manipulating the quantity of money.

What therapy is possible? The Keynesian treatment most acceptable to the conservative is variation of interest rates. But suppose, as the quotation argues, interest rates must be forced down so low to stimulate sluggish investors that the wealth-owners will not part with their wealth for so small a reward. In such circumstances the money which central banking authorities can so easily create will not flow into productive investment. If, in addition, the character of the demand for new investment funds is such that interest rate variation has little influence on the volume of new investment, then even direct lending by government agencies at rates of interest little higher than zero will have little impact on the scale of investment in the first instance and the level of national income and employment in the second.

Many of the *obiter dicta* scattered through the *General Theory* uneasily contemplate the possibility that extra money will disappear in the liquidity trap, interest rates will not fall low enough to evoke additional investment, and the marginal efficiency of capital (the expected profits from investment) will remain stubbornly low. Where such conditions obtain, monetary policy promises little or nothing.

What else is there? Keynes' clearest statement of the alternative occurs near the end of the concluding chapter of the *General Theory*. It is a remarkable combination of Keynes' characteristic emphases on diagnosis and treatment:

> In some other respects the foregoing theory is moderately conservative in its implications. For whilst it indicates the vital importance of establishing certain central controls in matters which are now left in the main to individual initiative, there are wide fields of activity which are unaffected. The State will have to exercise a guiding influence on the propensity to consume partly through its scheme of taxation, partly by fixing the rate of interest, and partly, perhaps, in other ways.
>
> Furthermore, it seems unlikely that the influence of banking policy on the rate of interest will be sufficient by itself to determine an optimum rate of investment. I conceive, therefore, that a somewhat comprehensive socialisation of investment will prove the only means of securing an approximation to full employment; though this need not exclude all manner of compromises and devices by which public authority will cooperate with private initiative. But beyond this no obvious case is made out for a system of State Socialism which would embrace most of the economic life of the community.
>
> It is not the ownership of the instruments of production which it is important for the State to assume. If the State is able to determine the aggregate amount of resources devoted to augmenting the instruments and the basic rate of reward to those who own them, it will have accomplished all that is necessary. Moreover, the necessary measures of socialisation can be introduced gradually and without a break of the general tradition of society.

The tone is calm, and the language is temperate, but the message is breathtaking. It is nothing less than an admission of the practical bankruptcy of any version of capitalism which attempts to limp along as an old-fashioned private enterprise system. The "capitalism" which Keynes envisages must make its peace with a state which exerts a "guiding influence" on consumption and undertakes on its own account a "somewhat comprehensive socialisation of investment." Since consumption and investment in a closed economic system are the components of total spending, Keynes' "capitalism" is translatable into a system in which total spending is directly or indirectly controlled by the State.

How is it possible to term such a resolution of economic impasse "moderately conservative in its implications"? In part, no doubt, because the unstated alternative to such policies is not old-style *laissez-faire* but a "system of State Socialism which would embrace most of the economic life of the community."

The remainder of the answer may lie in Keynes' affection for much that capitalism has achieved and his persistent confidence that reasonable men could combine new economic arrangements with old cultural values. Few defenders of capitalism, and no critic of Keynes of whom I am aware, have so eloquently declared capitalism's values:

> Let us stop for a moment to remind ourselves what these advantages are. These are partly

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> advantages of efficiency—the advantages of decentralisation and of the play of self-interest. The advantage to efficiency of the decentralisation of decision and of individual responsibility is even greater, perhaps, than the nineteenth century supposed; and the reaction against the appeal to self-interest may have gone too far. But, after all, individualism, if it can be purged of its defects and abuses, is the best safeguard of personal liberty in the sense that, compared with any other system, it greatly widens the field of personal choice. It is also the best safeguard of the variety of life, which emerges precisely from the extended field of personal choice, and the loss of which is the greatest of all losses of the homogeneous or totalitarian state. For this variety preserves the traditions which embody the most secure and successful choices of former generations; it colours the present with the diversification of its fancy.

"Purged of its defects and abuses": there's the crux of the matter.[10]

Can a system, recognisably capitalist, endure after defects of income distribution, inadequate investment, excessive saving, and persistent unemployment are removed? How much individualism will remain after a re-distributionist tax system has alleviated the problem of oversaving by diminishing inequalities of income? How much independence of choice will businessmen retain where government intervenes so substantially in the investment process? How much of that variety of life which Keynes enjoyed for himself as much as he cherished it for others can survive in the world of giant organisations?

In America, the doctrinal situation has its ironies. Intelligent businessmen and alert politicians have swallowed Keynesian techniques of monetary manipulation and fiscal adjustment just about the time that these measures have become inadequate to the problems to which they are applied. Although the more radical Keynes who contemplated with equanimity the euthanasia of the *rentier* missed many of the contours of to-day's economies,[11] his conception of social policy seems to have considerable point in a United States whose federal government spends $100 billion or more a year and whose Department of Defense alone disburses between $50 and $60 billion each twelve months.

Increasingly, the real choices of public policy must be made among various versions of private, public, and mixed socialisation rather than between capitalism and state socialism. No socialist, General Eisenhower in his startling farewell remarks to the nation alerted its citizens to the dangers of undue influence from the combination of military officials, defence contractors, and their political allies. Mr. Eisenhower feared that this growingly effective coalition threatened to "involve the very structure of our society." Occasionally truth issues from the mouths of ideological babes. For the General was describing the emergence of highly complex new "compromises by which public authority will co-operate with private initiative." The defence-oriented industries—electronics, missiles, and aircraft—are (in all but name and profit-distribution) government enterprises. The Communications Satellite Corporation, Congress' creation of last year, is a complicated mixture of the private socialism of American Telephone and Telegraph and the public socialism of the federal government. Inadequately, incompletely, and confusingly, the socialisation of investment which Keynes favoured is taking place under a wide variety of auspices.

EVEN THOUGH the main thrust of the volume is in the direction of monetary and fiscal policy, the *General Theory* contains premonitions of this world. But in this latest stage of Keynesian influence the version of Keynes which has become respectable leaves the world more or less as it is. Everybody is a Keynesian now: eminent conservative economists admit as much.

What is needed, however, is a theory to arm the vision of the second, more radical Keynes. Neither Keynes nor anyone else has told us how to socialise investment, invent the "compromises by which public authority will co-operate with private initiative," and content all the economic classes. Until a powerful theory emerges, economists will continue to advocate—with decreasing relevance—the policies of the conservative Keynes. How Keynes might have laughed to see the sight.

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[10] In recent years Keynes' reputation among Labour Party intellectuals has been somewhat mixed. Titmuss believes that Keynesian doctrine now stimulates social complacency, and offers a "justification for the absence of social protest in our society." More or less in agreement for once, Crossman and Crosland both appear to prefer the Galbraith of *The Affluent Society* to Keynes as a relevant contemporary analyst.

[11] But not always. In 1931 Keynes could say: "But more interesting is the trend of Joint Stock Institutions, when they have reached a certain age and size, to approximate to the status of public corporations rather than that of individualistic private enterprises. One of the most interesting and unnoticed developments of recent decades has been the tendency of big enterprise to socialise itself." Keynes' socialism was emphatically non-Marxist: "How can I accept a doctrine which sets up as its bible, above and beyond criticism, an obsolete economic textbook which I know to be not only scientifically erroneous but without interest or application for the modern world." Which may not have been quite the most prescient of Keynes' utterances.

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Winterset Rothberg

A Tirade Turning

I think of my more tedious contemporaries:

Roaring asses, hysterics; sweet-myself beatniks, earless wonders happy with effects a child of two could improve on: verbal delinquents; sniggering, mildly obscene souser-wowsers, this one writing as if only he had a penis, that one bleeding, but always in waltz-time; another intoning, over and over, in metres the expert have made hideous; the doleful, almost-good, over-trained technicians—what a mincing explicitness, what a profusion of adjectives, what a creaking of adverbs!

—And those life-hating hacks, the critics without sensibility, masters of a castrated prose, readers of one book by any given author (or excerpts thereof), aware of one kind of effect, lazy dishonest arrogant generalisers, tasteless anthologists, their lists of merit, their values changing with every whim and wind of academic fashion; wimble-wamble essayists; philosophers without premise; bony bluestocking commentators, full of bogus learning; horse-faced lady novelists, mere slop-jars of sensibility

—And those rude provincial American classicists, thumping along in a few clumsy staves, congratulating themselves in every other poem on their spiritual fortitude, their historical perspicacity, their ineffable god-like integrity; only-I-hear-it miniature Yvors, their sound effects usually the harsh rasp of a cracked kazoo; graceful anachronisms, trapped in one wavering collective image; aging maundering Wordsworthians, becalmed in dear William's Sky Canoe, throbbing back into the caves of cold dismay; timid Coleridges, swallowing seconal, sucking at greasy reefers or dead cigars; undelightful bower birds wafting their faint quavers to enraptured sophomores; peripheral twitterers, their toes turned inward

—Two-dimensional dreamers: barnyard mystics, braying for eternity; Jesus-creeping somnambulist converts, clutching their rosaries, slobbering over fake Arab bones, unaware of anyone else, living or dead

—The duchess of could-you, would-you, with her acrid asides and her lady's maid diction. (When I think of her, God thickens my tongue.)

—The professionally sincere; slug-nutty nihilists; misty-moisty mush-mouthed muttonheads; Arthur Saltonstall Robinson Flubb, IV; Henry Mortimer Clift, V; Miniver Cheevy Minsky, composer of salutes to space needles and astronauts; whistling ogres; metaphysical wailers; purveyors of tired literary ham-and-cheese, gefülte fisch, dead bananas; crazy rhapsodical lady poets running between religious retreats and national bridge tournaments; suburban Sapphos, decked out like female impersonators, leaning over the podium, dugs a-droop, moaning, barking like sea-lionesses

—And that breathless bounding moon-faced bourgeois bully-for-you boy, beaming idiotic goodwill from every oily pore, blowing and bil-

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lowing silly bromides, belching baked beans, inane homilies, inept praises, fake epiphanies, revelling in gracelessness, obtuse awkwardness, all wrong about everything that matters, mutters, or farts in a parcel

—And the professionally insane, stepping in and out of the madhouse as others would out of their baths, happy with their half-literate therapists, condemned out of their own mouths, self-indulgent, uncharitable, insentient

—And what of the Dylan-adorers, white-eared, fawn-eyed, fervent? Or the two-bit cisatlantic tough guys making like Marlon Brando on a motor-scooter, Edna St. Vincent Millay on a raft, Rupert Brooke in a balloon, Robert P. Tristam Coffin on a blueberry muffin?

O bottom hot-cake, O hesitant pretzel,
O mile-high meringue, O prodigious pudding,
O caperer in the Kangaroo Room,
O poet of the fire-plug, the privet-hedge, the second floor, the back porch, the decayed brothel, the English Institute,
—O maimed waif of change!—
Was it reading you I first felt, full in my face, the hot blast and clatter of insane machinery?
Yet heard,
Beneath the obscene murderous noise of matter gone mad,
Whose grinding dissonance threatens to overwhelm us all,
The small cry of the human?

I, the loneliest semi-wretch alive, a stricken minor soul,
Weep to you now;
But I've an eye to your leaping forth and fresh ways of wonder;
And I see myself beating back and forth like stale water in a battered pail;
Are not you my final friends, the fair cousins I loathe and love?
That man hammering I adore, though his noise reach the very walls of my inner self;
Behold, I'm a heart set free, for I have taken my hatred and eaten it,
The last acrid sac of my rat-like fury;
I have succumbed, like all fanatics, to my imagined victims;
I embrace what I perceive!
Brothers and sisters, dance ye,
Dance ye all!

Theodore Roethke, who died last summer, had asked that this "Tirade" be published under the pseudonym—known to his friends—of Winterset Rothberg. His widow, Mrs. Beatrice Roethke, writes to us:

"Tirade Turning" was written last fall or winter—the two seasons are indistinguishable in Seattle—during a long week-end at the studio on Bainbridge Island. I know of no particular circumstances that would explain its being written; perhaps it was a general condition: Ted was often ambivalent about the people with whom he competed, the cousins of his childhood and, later, other poets, particularly those with large or what he considered inflated reputations. (In this poem the poets *become* the cousins.)

He referred to it as "a piece of invective" and explained it as a way of working out his aggressions, of purging himself of hate. What seems significant, perhaps, is that the "Tirade" does turn.

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Five poems by Charles Tomlinson

Ute Mountain

"When I am gone"
the old chief said
"if you need me, call me,"
and down he lay, became stone.

They were giants then
(as you may see),
and we
are not the shadows of such men.

The long splayed Indian hair
spread ravelling out
behind the rocky head
in groins, ravines;

petered across the desert plain
through Colorado,
transmitting force
in a single undulant unbroken line

from toe to hair-tip: there
profiled, inclined away from one
are features, foreshortened, and the high
blade of the cheekbone.

Reading it so, the eye
can take the entire great
straddle of mountain-mass,
passing down elbows, knees and feet.

"If you need me, call me."
His singularity dominates the plain
as we call to our aid his image:
thus men make a mountain.

On a Mexican Straw Christ

This is not the event. This
Is a man of straw,
The legs straw-thin
The straw-arms shent
And nailed. And yet this dry
Essence of agony must be
Close-grained to the one
They lifted down, when
Consummatum est the event was done.
Below the baroque straw-
Haloed basket-head
And the crown, far more
Like a cap woven
For a matador than a crown of thorn,
A gap recedes: it makes
A mouth in pain, the teeth
Within its sideways-slashed
And gritted grin, are
Verticals of straw, and they
Emerge where the mask's
Chin ceases and become
Parallels plunging down, their sum
The body of God. Beneath,
Two feet join in one
Cramped culmination, as if
To say: "I am the un-
Resurrection and the Death."

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Small Action Poem

for Robert and Bobbie Creeley

To arrive
  unexpectedly
    from nowhere:
then:
  having done
    what it was
one came for,
  to depart.
    The door
is open now
  that before
    was neither
open
  nor was it there.
    It is like
Chopin
  shaking
    music from the fingers,
making that
  in which
    all is either
technique
  heightened to sorcery
    or nothing but notes.
To arrive
  unexpectedly
    at somewhere
and the final
  chord, the final
    word.

Landscape

After Octavio Paz

Rock and precipice,
More time than stone, this
Timeless matter.

Through its cicatrices
Falls without moving
Perpetual virgin water.

Immensity reposes here
Rock over rock,
Rocks over air.

The world's manifest
As it is: a sun
Immobile, in the abyss.

Scale of vertigo:
The crags weigh
No more than our shadows.

Mr. Brodsky

I had heard
before, of an
American who would have preferred
to be an Indian;
but not
until Mr. Brodsky, of one
whose professed and long
pondered-on passion
was to become a Scot,
who even sent for haggis and oatcakes
across continent.
Having read him
in Cambridge English
a verse or two
from MacDiarmid,
I was invited
to repeat the reading
before a Burns Night Gathering
where the Balmoral Pipers
of Albuquerque would
play in the haggis
out of its New York tin.
Of course, I said
No. No, I could *not* go
and then
half-regretted I had not been.
But to console
and cure the wish, came
Mr. Brodsky, bringing
his pipes and played
until the immense, distended
bladder of leather seemed
it could barely contain its water—
tears (idle
tears) for the bridal of Annie Laurie
and Morton J. Brodsky.
A bagpipe in a dwelling is
a resonant instrument
and there he stood
lost in the gorse
the heather or whatever
six thousand
miles and more
from the infection's source,
in our neo-New Mexican Parlour
where I had heard
before of an
American who would have preferred
to be merely an Indian.

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THEATRE

The Kitchen Sink

On Recent Developments in Drama — By G. Wilson Knight

Dramatic vitality comes, as it were, from below. This "below" may be what we call "instinct" or the "unconscious mind;" or it may be a pushing up from some low social stratum; it is always "Dionysian," it favours what is unsophisticated and uncivilised, challenging orthodoxies and respectabilities. Anger is dramatic. The language of drama may be most gripping when drawn from some dialect that has not been attenuated and drained by modern sophistication, as in the Irish dramatists, the Gloucestershire dialect of Masefield's *Nan*, the Americanised negro talk of O'Neill's *The Emperor Jones*. Whereas middle-class respectability is the normal hunting-ground of comedy, drama of tragic affinities looks deeper: it is the natural enemy of a diluted sophistication.

Our modern dramas have been breaking new ground.[1] Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* is a strong study in ferocity; a self-generated, unconditioned, causeless and motiveless fury rising from the mysterious inner dynamisms of the human soul. The attack is delivered through an amazing resource of half-slangy, intensely modern phrases; it is a kind of poetry, coming naturally from an educated young man of low birth and blending a contumacious proletarianism with the academic tradition, for Jimmy Porter's range of reference is wide. On occasion it can rise to the compact brilliance of "a kind of female Emily Brontë."

Elsewhere we find a more obviously low-life idiom. Irish seems to be losing its monopoly of vivid speech. Talk is northern in Shelagh Delaney's *A Taste of Honey*, London-Jewish in Arnold Wesker's *Chicken Soup with Barley* and East Anglian in his *Roots*; gipsy-nomad in John Arden's *Live Like Pigs*; and Teddy Boy in Ann Jellicoe's *The Sport of my Mad Mother*. In Willis Hall's *The Long and the Short and the Tall* the cockney soldier Bamforth has an inexhaustible fund of contumacious wit, not unlike Jimmy Porter's, dominating the Welsh and Scots of other characters. The conversations are drawn from a background of peace life, as in *Journey's End*, but the life is socially low and the more vivid for its lowness. The wit, the dramatic force and punch, come from a way of life undiluted by the inhibitions of social refinement and their lowest common denominator of educated phrase.

Shelagh Delaney shows what may be done with slum talk. Her people express themselves with pungency and can characterise each other with crispness and force. We begin to wonder whether our middle-class language is properly talk at all: it lacks the sap, the wholeness of perception, the tang and taste of direct living.

We are, however, aware not so much of any particular straining after a richness of dialect comparable to that of Synge or O'Casey, as by innumerable turns of thought peculiar to the speakers and their way of life. These people are close to the fundamentals of physical existence. Food is a recurring theme: the term "Kitchen Sink" is far from inappropriate, since it is remarkable how many of these plays contain a kitchen sink or some equivalent, and there are

[1] John Osborne, *Look Back in Anger* (Faber & Faber, 1956); Shelagh Delaney, *A Taste of Honey* (Methuen, 1959); Arnold Wesker, "Chicken Soup With Barley," *The Wesker Trilogy* (Jonathan Cape, 1960); Arnold Wesker, *Roots* (Penguin, 1959); John Arden, "Live Like Pigs," *New English Dramatists* 3 (Penguin, 1961); Ann Jellicoe, "The Sport of My Mad Mother," *The Observer Plays* (Faber & Faber, 1958); Willis Hall, *The Long and the Short and the Tall* (Heinemann, 1959).

G. Wilson Knight, *the famous Shakespearean critic, recently retired from the Chair of English Literature at Leeds. He is the author of numerous works, his best-known being* The Wheel of Fire. *Many critics, including T. S. Eliot and F. R. Leavis, have paid tribute to his pioneering interpretations of Shakespeare.*

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continual reminders of food. References to birth, sexual intercourse, and physical death appear without the distancing which has to many of us become habitual. The people are in more direct relation to their own life, unmediated by conventions. Helen in *A Taste of Honey* and Kit in *The Lion in Love* are adventuresses, living from day to day without social relevance and responsibility. The gipsy-nomads of John Arden's *Live Like Pigs* resent being forced from their caravans—or caravan-equivalent—into state houses. We often find ourselves in the company of displaced persons, a tendency which reaches an extreme in the prison scenes of Brendan Behan's *The Quare Fellow*.[2] The tramp Davies in Harold Pinter's *The Caretaker* radiates lines of force, and even dignity, from his vagabond personality. It was no chance that Colin Wilson, a writer whose rise to public esteem synchronised with that of John Osborne, should have opened his career with a book entitled *The Outsider*. Most of our dramatists are writing about "outsiders"; people, that is, who are "outside" our conventional, which in this context means our middle-class, valuations. They are not outside life itself; they are generally nearer to it than we are.

Social categories are obviously involved, but such dramas cannot be finally placed in social terms. What makes them live as dramas is their vitality, the life-nearness, the sap and roots, of the people in all their vice, humour, courage, and simplicity. There is even, despite the prevailing thesis of Wesker's *Roots*, a certain charm in Mrs. Bryant's hour by hour interest in the passing bus, witnessing as it does to the slower rhythms of country life as against the forward-grasping anxieties of the city. On such simplicities we cannot look down; we can learn from them; learn secrets of human existence, as it is, for all of us, but more vividly apparent, and often more vocal, among the unsophisticated than among ourselves.

Corresponding to our many examples of expressive language we have a countering dramatic tendency to inexpressive repetitions such as those used by T. S. Eliot in *Sweeney Agonistes*, together with a sense, descending from Chekhov, of failure in communication. Harold Pinter's people[3] are generally at cross-purposes with each other and sometimes tangled in a world of disconcerting objectivity. Mental discontinuities balance objective absurdities to arouse suspense and a sense of threat, bordering on insanity, as when in *The Dumb Waiter* mysterious orders for elaborate meals come down the lift from what had once been a restaurant to the basement kitchen where the two ambiguous ruffians are at their simultaneously flaccid and ominous talk; wherein perhaps a lucid symbolism may be felt flowering from a superficial absurdity. Pinter's conversation is usually that of lower middle-class normality, and the disconcerting objects those of town life and human fabrication. In *The Caretaker* Mick reels off a speech about London districts and its various bus-routes and then one about the legal and financial conditions for letting his property, in such a way as to make one dizzy. Questions may be left unanswered: who is the negro in *The Room* who comes up from the basement of the tenement house, striking terror? Much of this is in the manner of Eugène Ionesco. What is so strange is that we are nowadays given the experience of nightmare, almost of the supernatural, in terms not of devils or ghosts, but of ordinary, material objects and affairs; and of people at cross-purposes with each other and with the audience in a paradoxical and dangerous world. These dramatic qualities are clearly the obverse, though both may come in a single play, of those we considered first, and to be aligned mainly with town life and the complexities of middle-class civilisation. Where life is less sophisticated there is more assurance. The prisoners in Brendan Behan's *The Quare Fellow* know where they are and what they want; and as for communication, Shelagh Delaney's people show no lack of that.

These two dramatic worlds are juxtaposed in Wesker's *Roots*. The girl Beatie is equally dissatisfied with her family's simple farm life and with the mass-entertainment provided by modern techniques. What the author presumably wants is to arouse in the lower society a genuine impulse towards advance; to awake, and draw vitality from, the soil to make something better and more deeply rooted—the title *Roots* must be remembered—than those in cultural power are offering.

Pinter's *The Caretaker* is similarly comprehensive. The two brothers Aston and Mick are intelligent young men of some education, but one has been in a mental home and the other appears to be a near candidate. They, especially Aston, and their general situation and prospects together in their extraordinary room, appear to be peculiarly static: they are getting, and are likely to get, nowhere. In contrast the tramp Davies is dynamic; and it is natural that the mentally paralysed Aston should welcome him to his home of meaningless jumble. The disreputable Davies is in comparison a force of health. Communication is difficult; Davies is

[2] Brendan Behan, *The Quare Fellow* (Methuen, 1956).

[3] Harold Pinter, *The Caretaker* (Methuen, 1960); "The Dumb Waiter," *New English Dramatists*, 3 (Penguin, 1961) and *The Birthday Party and Other Plays* (Methuen, 1960); "The Room," *The Birthday Party and Other Plays*.

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baffled by the lumber, is afraid of the stove, and finds the draught from the broken window more disturbing than the open roads. Two worlds, those of a vigorous outsider and those of a derelict civilisation, conflict.

WHAT, WE MAY ASK, has contemporary drama to say concerning those more universal dramatic themes of the occult and death, of heroism, of religion? The answer is, a great deal. In any awakening from below, whether that "below" be social or psychological, Dionysus is likely to be present. Moreover the suspense and terror worked up from paradoxical states of mind, objects, and situations, from the irrational, has a numinous impact; as when in Pinter's *The Birthday Party* the simple-minded lodger accepts the drum he has been given, wearing it in child-like manner and walking about as he plays, till the beats grow more and more savage and his face becomes possessed. What we call the "occult," which means the "hidden," nowadays presses on us from tangible objects and paradoxical mental states; but it is no less frightening than the ghost-lore of earlier dramas. Fears of madness are interspersed throughout *A Taste of Honey*; so are remembrances of death. In face of both Shelagh Delaney's people are brave. The heroine Jo and her mother are each indomitable; and so is Kit in *A Lion in Love*.

Colin Wilson, who may often be regarded as the philosophic voice of our dramatic movement, has in *The Age of Defeat*[4] made a plea for a new sense of heroism in terms of modern purposes and repudiations; heroism developing from what he calls the "outsider" consciousness so emphatic in contemporary drama. This will clearly, as he himself says, be a heroism of Hamlet-like affinities.

Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* has for hero a reincarnation of Hamlet. Jimmy Porter is a young man like Hamlet of frightening mental energy, remorseless in attack, but without clear purpose, nor any outlet in action. Like so much in our records of genius, he is, as was Hamlet, sexually ill-at-ease, as bitter as Wycherley in denouncing the sexual voracities, the python domination, of women. There is more than a hint of homosexuality. He half envies what he calls the "Michelangelo brigade" as a relief from the heterosexual lusts and "expense of spirit"—a phrase he quotes—of Shakespeare's Sonnets (I; Sonnet 129). His wife's mother had suspected him of homosexual propensities and engaged a private detective to watch him, before the marriage. As for the Oedipus complex, which may be defined as a premature initiation, through parental contact, into the tragic emotions of maturity—and that is precisely why it is so often associated with genius—Jimmy Porter has experienced precisely such an initiation when as a boy he had nursed his dying father, whose death weighs on his mind as the death of Hamlet's father on his. Like Hamlet's, his thoughts are dominated by death. The extent to which death is almost driving him mad is evident when in the manner of Hamlet's words to Claudius he deliberately torments his wife with an imagined description of her mother's body undergoing the horrors of dissolution. His cruelty is the obverse of a crushed and thwarted genius for sympathy, and it is perfectly in character that as soon as he hears of his friend's mother dying and in need of help, he is at once active, in his element, and goes to her bedside. His deepest instincts are nurse-like; it is after he learns of his wife's loss of the child that he softens at the end. Jimmy Porter is a study in love, but, however freely he may indulge himself, he is not sexually at ease, nor content. He knows it: "He thinks he's got a sort of genius for love and friendship—on his own terms." In him is a "burning virility of mind and spirit that looks for something as powerful as itself." Cliff is his Horatio. Osborne's study is not unworthy of its great prototype; nor is it strange that Jimmy Porter, whose jazz trumpet challenges the church bells, should have been subsequently developed by Osborne into the religious revolutionary, Martin Luther.

In *Anger and After* Mr. John Russell Taylor observes that in both *Look Back in Anger* and *The Entertainer* Osborne shows a nostalgic feeling for the Edwardian period. But remembrance of two world wars divides us from many of that period's assumptions. War-heroism, for so long the key-value of all national societies, has been dissolving before our eyes. Willis Hall's *The Long and the Short and the Tall* drives home war's realities as firmly as *Journey's End* and the more powerfully for the narrowing of its horror to a single, personal problem; and John Arden's *Serjeant Musgrave's Dance* works up its attack on imperialist war to a strong climax in exposure of the skeleton of a young man who had died on imperial service. Even so, contemporary drama[5] offers less explicit anti-war propaganda than might have been expected. Arnold Wesker's *Chips with Everything*, pits at a strong moment a rankers' ballad chorus of Dionysian power against militaristic officialdom; but the

[4] Colin Wilson, *The Age of Defeat* (Victor Gollancz, 1959).

[5] John Russell Taylor, *Anger and After* (Methuen, 1962); John Osborne, *The Entertainer* (Faber & Faber, 1957); John Arden, *Serjeant Musgrave's Dance* (Methuen, 1960); Arnold Wesker, *Chips With Everything* (Cape, 1962 and Penguin 7 1963).

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supposedly enlightened hero, after being convicted as a power-seeker in the manner of Auden's *Ascent of F 6*, accepts the bayonet-practice he has no longer the right to refuse; and we end with a parade-ground ceremonial dramatically asserting a purpose beyond the limitations of the play's constituent thought. There appears to be a meaning in Wesker's dramatic construction that outspaces his declared opinions.

John Whiting's experiments[6] in the heroic vein handle variously the "outsider," traditional soldiering, and religion. *Saint's Day* has for hero a literary genius at odds with society; *Penny for a Song* makes good-natured fun of war, according a dramatic if farcical sympathy to its hero's military exploits; and the weightier *Marching Song* dares to recognise stature in a general who has been professionally involved in an appalling war-crime. Whiting's strength lies in his freedom from contemporary inhibitions; he can at least be interested, and without rancour, in war. In *The Devils* he enters the spheres of occultism and religion. Though the demoniac possession of the nuns is understood in terms of psychology and fraud, the contact with the occult is dramatically established; and the heroic Grandier is a deeply moving study, to be compared with Osborne's *Luther* and Robert Bolt's *A Man for all Seasons*,[7] in religious martyrdom. To him death is the "meaning" and "purpose" of existence, opening into "everlasting life."

DEATH, THE KEY-PROBLEM of all solemn drama, weighs heavily on our present group; examples have already been noticed. We are aware too of a striving, which prompts even the satire of Nigel Dennis' *The Making of Moo*,[8] towards solutions in metaphysical or religious terms, and we naturally expect more contacts with the spiritualistic. Some famous non-British dramas are here peculiarly relevant.

Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* is more than a critique of American business, and at the heart of it we find a spiritualistic fact. As the plot thickens, the hero becomes aware of, and speaks and listens to, his brother Ben who has recently died and henceforth functions as an authoritative source of counsel. Within the play's modernistic technique his presence is both convincing and important, forming a major element in the drama's construction.

Equally relevant is Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*.[9] Here the two tramps are natural exponents, in "Kitchen Sink" or "outsider" terms, of the human norm. One of them continually talks of Christ, and a religious atmosphere pervades. They watch Pozzo the tyrannic master and Lucky his slave, who together in dramatic shorthand condense human history. That Pozzo should end up blind and Lucky dumb denotes the simultaneous loss of aristocratic vision and revolutionary assertion from which, according to this pessimistic play, our world suffers. The tramps are "waiting for Godot"; the name inevitably suggests "God." Though he composes in French Beckett's native language is English, and within the play both God and Godot are referred to as having white beards.

At one point there are extended thoughts on the spirit-voices of the dead. Now the Boy who comes from Godot is clearly conceived in the age-old dramatic tradition, descending from Plato, in which some boy or youth represents, as I have shown throughout *The Golden Labyrinth*, some angel or spirit-link. That he, who looks after the goats, should not be beaten by Godot whereas his brother, who looks after the sheep, is, constitutes a neat comment on the ethical transvaluations for which the occult and Dionysian, or Faustian, powers of our dramatic tradition have for centuries been labouring. The boy seems to have come before, and yet he does not remember it; and on his second appearance he seems to be the other brother. These ambiguities appear to signify both the questionable nature of the Dionysian transvaluations—the boy's statement that Godot has a white and not a black beard is appropriately met by "Christ have mercy on us!"—and also the indecisiveness, and on occasion disconcerting contradictions, of spirit-messages; both anxieties were, at the fountain-head of Renaissance, Faustian, drama, compactly summed in Hamlet's "The spirit that I have seen may be the devil" (*Hamlet*, II, ii). Without attempting any too exact an interpretation we can say that *Waiting for Godot* reflects an age socially and metaphysically ill-at-ease, awaiting some new revelation, but at present getting no more than indecisive encouragement in terms of spirit-communication and other Faustian inspiration.

PERHAPS THE MOST WIDELY ACCLAIMED of our advanced dramatists is Eugène Ionesco, a Rumanian by birth, writing in French. His dramas, which have probably influenced Pinter,

[6] John Whiting, "Saint's Day," "Penny for a Song," and "Marching Song," *Plays* (Heinemann, 1957); "Marching Song," *New English Dramatists*, 5 (Penguin, 1962); *The Devils* (Heinemann, 1961 and Penguin 6).

[7] John Osborne, *Luther* (Faber & Faber, 1961); Robert Bolt, *A Man For All Seasons* (Heinemann, 1960 and Penguin 6).

[8] Nigel Dennis, *Two Plays and a Preface* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1958).

[9] Arthur Miller, *Death of a Salesman* (Cresset Press, 1949; Samuel Beckett, *Waiting for Godot* (Faber & Faber, 1956).

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enjoy playing tricks with illogicality and absurdity.[10] Action and event may be patently absurd. The material universe is felt as alien, sometimes comic, sometimes ghastly and threatening, generally paradoxical. Death is an obsession: it makes all living, all values, meaningless. But in contrast we have an ethereal state of being and intimations of a glorified nature, pure light and bright colours, such as that suggested by the stage directions of the second act of Ibsen's *When We Dead Awaken*; corresponding to the experiences of mystics, or to romantic poetry; to Aldous Huxley's claims for mescalin and other vision-inducing drugs; and to the descriptions of higher planes delivered to-day by spirit-entities speaking through trance-mediumship or the "direct voice." In *Victims of Duty* we move from a kind of psychoanalysis, through converse with the dead by means of a good imitation of the "direct voice" (since according to the author's first intention the Father's words are bodiless), to a mystical experience which includes levitation, and finally back to a mad torment of food-stuffing. Ionesco asserts[11] that all his plays derive from the interplay of these two main states of consciousness, spiritual and material. Another clear dramatic statement of them is *The Killer*, wherein the hero has experience of a wondrous place, or plane, in part visionary and in part related to human planning, and possessing all the attributes of an esoteric summerland or etheric sphere. The delight is however ruined by awareness of murder and death, like another Eden desecrated by the Fall, in a surrounding atmosphere of intricate officialdom and city complications. This is Ionesco's nightmare. It is as though men were natives of some brighter order paradoxically immersed in a meaningless materiality and a hostile civilisation.

Miller, Beckett, and Ionesco are accordingly writing within what we may call the esoteric traditions of Western drama, and cannot be understood without recognition of their spiritualistic affinities. To-day the nightmarish or numinous effects are likely to come from material objects, from human inventions, from physically apprehended deaths; or from mental neurosis. Not from ghosts or demons. The complications of a materialistic civilisation, in all their constricting paradox and metaphysical inadequacy, make our terror. To-day ghosts, or any intimations of some less clogged order of being, are likely to bring fresh air and sanity. That is the point at which we have arrived.

In England our Kitchen Sink dramas are, despite their many limitations, probably the strongest single movement in contemporary writing. Flowering from a natural sap, they have virility and thrust. Many taboos are broken. For better or worse, physical realities are faced and instincts spoken of freely in a way not possible for earlier dramatists. Homosexual proclivities, for centuries a communal fear, become dramatically insistent. From America, Miller's *A View from the Bridge* treats sympathetically its effeminate youth, and Edward Albee's *The Zoo Story* and *The American Dream* have relevant contacts. At home, we have Jimmy Porter's half-admitted tendencies: Geoffrey, once called a "nursemaid," is the sanest person in *A Taste of Honey*; and Prince Henri de Condé, the exponent of right judgment in *The Devils*, is an "exquisite and handsome sodomite" attended by a bevy of boys playing round him "like butterflies." Such themes—Peter Shaffer's *Five Finger Exercise* presents another—are one strand of a general fabric that above all emphasises youth.[12]

Youth in our dramatic past has been used variously: for conventional love-interests; more subtly, with bi-sexual and seraphic pointing; or if tragic, to drive home, as in Ibsen, the sins of maturity. Only rarely has it been accorded the honour of the protagonists part, as in *Hamlet*. To-day its dramatic reassertion is comparable to the dramatic elevation of protagonist-women by Ibsen and Shaw. We watch an interesting attempt not only to understand, but to draw strength and wisdom from youth; and youth not simply as an ideal but as an appalling reality, sometimes a threat. Among our authors, though some are not angry and some not men, the term "angry young men" still registers. The term "teenager" was coined to meet an intuition of youth as pre-eminently active, as an agent. The adoration of young male singers by still younger devotees is as symptomatic of our time as was the cult of female film-stars of an earlier period. But there are the darker elements too of the Teddy Boy and related movements, as dramatised in Ann Jellicoe's *The Sport of My Mad Mother*, and in the choreography, mime, and music of *West Side Story*, wherein the story of *Romeo and Juliet* is given a modern and Dionysian thrust. It is as though, as our

[10] An excellent account of Ionesco's plays (trans. Donald Watson; John Calder, 4 vols., 1958–60) is given by Richard N. Coe, *Ionesco*, 1961 (*Writers and Critics* series, Oliver & Boyd).

[11] See "The Starting Point," used as a preface to the plays. Donald Watson's translation, Vol. I (John Calder, 1958).

[12] Arthur Miller, *A View from the Bridge* (Cresset Press, 1957); Edward Albee, "The Zoo Story" and "The American Dream," *The Zoo Story and Other Plays* (Jonathan Cape, 1962); Peter Shaffer, "Five Finger Exercise," *New English Dramatists*, 4 (Penguin, 1961).

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dramatic tradition with its many figures of seraphic youth has for long suggested, there is some essence here, some elixir, which we must labour to assimilate. Our new dramas honour it the more by approaching it in the realistic and unsentimental terms with which Shelagh Delaney handles her young people. Even the worst, the dangerous Teddy Boys, may be supposed the negative of some valid essence, as may be hinted by their extraordinarily gentle designation and their equally extraordinary choice of Edwardian dress, such as that worn by Geoffrey in *A Taste of Honey*, harking back, as does Osborne, to what, externally at least, appears a higher state of civilisation than our own.

Much of our argument is covered by Bernard Kops' *The Hamlet of Stepney Green*.[13] The action is set in a Jewish community in the east end of London. The subject, throughout, is death; probably no previous play has been written, except *Everyman*, so concentratedly concerned with death. There is a surrounding atmosphere of tomb-stones and spiritualist séances and for two-thirds of the play the young David's dead father Sam Levy functions as a stage person, talking to his son directly and once communicating with others, in part comically, through a séance.

David is a "neurotic young man" who is reluctant to work on a fish-stall and thinks only of his own beautiful voice, wanting to be a "pop" singer. He is conceived as a youth of vivid fascination. Before dying his father, Sam, who had formerly reproved him, calls him "part of that lovely dream that slipped through my fingers," and encourages him in his ambitions, his reading, and his "strange friends." The dying Sam is age watching youth in all its anti-social wildness and its intimations of existence beyond convention, even beyond earthly life:

> SAM: I want to change everything. I want something new to happen. I want to lose all sense of order, so that I'll be prepared for my new existence if there is one! Everyone where I'm going may be like you.

David responds:

> DAVID: Listen, everyone; listen, folks. This is David Levy speaking, your master of ceremonies, your own prince of song, a prisoner of seasons, a disciple of dust. I fell out of the sky and a name fell upon me, and I was called Levy and now for a time I answer to that.

Man is a spirit-being temporarily clothed in time and flesh, and in youth that spirit may be evident and vocal. Here, as so often in our dramatic tradition, youth is a seraphic equivalent: "everyone where I'm going may be like you."

His father dies and returns as a ghost, unseen by others but talking freely to David, like the ghost in T. L. Beddoes' *Death's Jest-Book*. David thinks that his mother and a widower-friend have poisoned his father. He dresses up in clothes blending the get-up of a Teddy Boy with suggestions of Hamlet—verbal reminiscences from *Hamlet* are continual—and, his father beside him, acts madly. He represents contemporary youth, such as Jimmy Porter, in conflict with family or society, and behaving wildly, like the hero of *Billy Liar* (by Keith Waterhouse and Willis Hall), and like Hamlet.

He at first speaks to his father derogatorily, calling ghosts "displaced persons," but they get on well:

> DAVID: What's it like being a dead?
> SAM: I can't answer that question. It's without meaning. You may as well ask a blind man to describe the colour green.

Again:

> SAM: Only certain people see ghosts, only certain people want to see ghosts. You don't look into the gutter for flying birds.

As a spirit Sam is freer than before and has visited parts of London that he had neglected. He is temporarily earthbound because David's anxieties had called him and he must stay, like the spirit of Almanzor's mother in Dryden's *Conquest of Granada*, until his son becomes a "happy boy." That is why he has not met anyone on the other side. He longs for a light "brighter than earth" such as he has known in "symphonies" and "poetry," but lives at present only in David's thoughts and when forgotten by him expects to be really dead. Though uncertain, he thinks it "unlikely" that people live for ever. Meanwhile he can say "I'm doing my work properly," and when that work is accomplished he goes off "to regions unknown."

What he does is to deflect David from thoughts of revenge, make him replace his egotism by acceptance of a good girl's love, and cause him to be satisfied with the fish-stall. But, and the "but" is important, David will now "sell herrings and croon at the same time," as "the first singing herring salesman in history," with a "heart of gold," now a "king" as well as a lover. We have accordingly three stages to consider: David as a youth of song reflecting the seraphic order, reproved by his elders; David as an anti-social, half-mad, Hamlet-Teddy Boy; and David as bringing his songs and heart's

[13] Bernard Kops, "The Hamlet of Stepney Green," *New English Dramatists*, 1 (Penguin, 1959).

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gold to an unspectacular job and a true marriage. The development is arranged by his "dead" father, functioning as the singer's "other self." The implications, psychological, social, and spiritual, are wide.

SOMEWHERE IN THE religious sphere lies whatever answers there may be. That is why the church bells are so important in *Look Back in Anger* and why the opposition of those bells and Jimmy Porter's jazz trumpet—the dialogue of *The Lion in Love* makes a similar contrast—sinks so deep. This, which is the central conflict in O'Casey, and indeed of the Renaissance world, can only be resolved when such persons as Jimmy Porter push *through* their sexual obsessions and horror of physical death to the unifying positives of Plato, Michelangelo and Shakespeare which I have elsewhere aligned with both Christianity and Spiritualism under the term "the seraphic intuition' (*The Christian Renaissance*, 1962; Epilogue).

P.S. Among the more famous advanced plays of spiritualistic reliance I should have included Jean-Paul Sartre's *Huis Clos*. Of the tendencies I have noted in Ionesco his recent *Exit the King*, which might be called a composite of *Everyman, King Lear* and W. Y. Evans-Wentz's *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, forms a fascinating extension.

FROM SUCH AN understanding and from such an acceptance a new culture might be born. The corresponding *actions* are, however, less easy to define. When Jimmy Porter complains that there are no fine causes left, Professor Sadhan Kumar Ghosh, in his recent *My English Journey* (Calcutta, 1961), remarks that there are plenty of them, such as vivisection, so long decried by John Cowper Powys, and anti-racial atrocities. These cry out for action; they are not, says Professor Ghosh, exciting enough for us; and that is, indeed, the trouble. Nor can we be excited to order. What is wrong is our state of being, and until we change this through a full recognition of our own instincts, such as that for which John Osborne appears to be labouring in his recent work, and also through attention to the spirit-powers which speak to-day as they have spoken throughout the centuries, we shall not find virtue inspiring.

Our Kitchen Sink dramas, flowering from the lower strata, the soil, of contemporary society, exist to bring new health to the insane paradoxes of a decaying culture. Our dramas of the absurd exist to let substances break through, as when Ionesco in *The Chairs* peoples a room with unseen presences, which are not on other terms assimilable by our sterile sophistication. Whenever the first prove merely sordid or the second merely absurd we shall not find them worthy of our attention.

Badly-chosen Lover

Criminal, you took a great piece of my life
And you took it under false pretences
That piece of time
—In the clear muscles of my brain
I have the lens and jug of it!
Books, thoughts, meals, days and houses,
Half Europe, spent like a coarse banknote,
You took it—leaving mud and cabbage stumps.

And, Criminal, I damn you for it (very softly)
My spirit broke her fast on you. And, Turk,
You fed her with the breath of your neck
—In my brain's clear retina
I have the stolen love-behaviour.
Your heart, greedy and tepid, brothel-meat
Gulped it, like a flunkey with erotica.
And very softly, Criminal, I *damn* you for it.

Rosemary Tonks

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NOTES & TOPICS

Event or Happening?

WHAT WAS THE POINT? Why should almost a hundred playwrights, producers, directors, critics, and other theatre people, many of them very distinguished names, forgather in the Athens of the North and expose themselves to the full rigours of its climate and cuisine? There was a good deal of confusion about this question: quite unnecessarily so, for the organiser of the Edinburgh conference (John Calder) had explained it plainly in the introduction to the programme brochure: "The purpose of the Drama Conference is . . . to fill in the background and to let those who are creating to-day's theatre . . . speak for themselves and explain themselves. . . ." In other words: a public relations operation designed to make it easier for the public to understand what contemporary theatre is about. Yet it is difficult to blame some of the eminent personalities on the platform of the McEwan Hall for getting it all slightly wrong. Most international congresses and conferences are called to reach conclusions, settlements, or agreements, or at least to exchange useful information. At an international conference of, say, entomologists, methods and results are discussed and each of the participants emerges with a concrete gain at the end: he has learned new facts, heard of new developments which he can henceforth make his own. This clearly could not apply to dramatists. Would it be fruitful for Harold Pinter and Lillian Hellman to discuss their respective methods of work? Is it imaginable that as a result Pinter would write more like Hellman and *vice versa*? Yet somehow subconsciously the analogy with the working congress of scientists underlay the proceedings. Wolf Mankowitz's resolution, designed to give the writer protection against arbitrary changes in his text—the censorship debate and resolution—Max Frisch's, in itself admirable, proposal that an international institute for the improvement of translation standards should be set up with money from the Rockefeller Foundation—all these were attempts to channel the discussions into the direction of a conference with concrete aims. But they petered out, precisely because it is only on so technical and therefore, from the audience's view, humdrum and uninteresting level that playwrights have any real common ground (not to mention the managers, directors, actors, and critics whose interests are often in open conflict).

Undeniably, the tension between actual purposes and unrealistic expectations produced some disappointment and malaise. "What are we here for? . . . What are we supposed to be doing? . . ." became a kind of *leitmotiv* of the discussions. Behind the scenes of the public sessions, as always in these cases, the meeting *was* fruitful on a purely personal level: the parties dragged on late into the nights and even seemed to produce some lasting friendships across barriers of cultural and national incomprehension and prejudice. The public sessions, too, for all their confusion, were in the final reckoning extraordinarily instructive, albeit only in a negative sense. The very misunderstandings and conceptual muddles were illuminating.

THE MAIN IMPRESSION that, for me at least, emerged from it all is simple enough: playwrights are *not* thinkers (in spite of Eric Bentley's stimulating book with that title). They do not *want* to be thinkers; and it is the fault of critics (who, in analysing the playwrights' intuitions have isolated systems of thought buried in their work) if some playwrights now labour under the mistaken idea that they *have* to be thinkers in order to be playwrights. The idea that a playwright (or any other creative thinker for that matter) should regard his work as the concretisation of a body of social or philosophical thought is the basic fallacy that underlies the endlessly misleading discussion about "commitment" (and it was constantly raising its ugly head). Everybody used the term "commitment" as though they had recognised that one could not get by without paying at least lip-service to it. Hardly anyone used it in the sense in which its advocates had originally made it fashionable. "I feel myself committed to the truth. . . . I am committed to say what I feel. . . ." Phrases like these constantly recurred and showed that "commitment" by now has become almost synonymous with sincerity or integrity, having lost its original implication that the playwright should deliberately support a given political or social line and tailor his work in accordance with such objectives.

John Arden categorically declared that he did not think the theatre is ever any use in changing society. I think he should have qualified this statement by adding "directly" or "immediately," as he himself went on to point out that the theatre *could* make people aware of the cruelty or delight of existence, and surely such an awareness would have long-term political and social effects. It was one of the ironies of the situation that (at least in private) some of the delegates from the Communist countries were very much against the ideal of the West European apostles of (Left-wing) commitment and

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socialist realism. And Professor Jan Kott, the eminent Polish critic and Shakespearean scholar, tellingly pointed to the fact that the political effect of a work of art may depend on the historical circumstances of its performance rather than on the political intentions of its author. In his opinion the most devastatingly political theatrical event he had ever witnessed was a performance of *Waiting for Godot* in Warsaw —in an atmosphere saturated with socialist realism the performance of a play concerned with the basic realities of the human condition outside the social context assumed the proportions of a major revolutionary statement.

THE REAL DIVERGENCE of views which emerged concerned not the political *effect* so much as the original *intention* in the mind of the writer. To the advocates of "commitment" in the traditional sense the work of art is the outcome, the expression, the concrete embodiment of a pre-existing idea. Diametrically opposed to this is the conception of the work of art as the product of *a process of discovery*. Alain Robbe-Grillet made this point most tellingly: writing a novel or a film (or, if it came to it, a play) is for him an exploration of hitherto unknown territory, an experiment of which he does not know the outcome when he starts out on it and while he is engaged in it. Ionesco made the same point when he said that to him any work of art is "an improvisation that has been given lasting form." And Barry Reckord pointed out that drama, by putting three-dimensional characters into concrete situations, constitutes a far more complex, a far more subtly shaded expression of reality than any one-dimensional political argument could ever encompass; and that therefore it is simply a logical impossibility for a play ever to be a valid implementation of such single-minded ideas as political slogans or principles. In this view, also, the dramatist is an explorer. By recreating reality on the stage he elucidates subtleties of human relationships that remain unnoticed in the amorphous, unstructured form in which they occur in the confusion of real life.

Any suggestion that this trend of thought might have been discernible to the public that attended the debates would be most misleading. It takes some rumination to distil a line of argument from the welter of unrelated and mutually irrelevant statements that constituted the bulk of the proceedings. Critics came in for a lot of criticism or plain abuse: justifiably, I think, for classifying and categorising playwrights to the point at which they feel hemmed in, predetermined, trapped in the theoretical notions to which their work has given rise; unjustly, I am convinced, in view of the fact that they are trying to clarify, explain, and elucidate—to define terms without which genuine understanding, genuine debate, would be quite impossible. Nowhere could the need for precisely defined terms be more clearly seen than in the speeches and counter-speeches at Edinburgh. The terminological confusion was unbelievable. In the debate on "Internationalism *v.* Nationalism" in the theatre, Kenneth Tynan spoke against chauvinistic nationalism. "But you yourself are going to work for a National Theatre!" somebody interjected. As if a National Theatre meant a Nationalistic Theatre. . . . Or again: what is meant by the term "theatre"? Joan Littlewood spoke of her "ideal theatre" in the shape of a vast fun-palace where young people could go and improvise, make their own films or, for that matter, make love. An admirable idea—but in what sense is love-making, whether in public or in private, definable as *theatre*? Allan Kaprow, the young American director who experiments with "happenings," regards any form of public spectacle—the changing of the guard at Buckingham Palace, the Mass, the Nuremberg rallies—as theatre. Undoubtedly there are theatrical elements in all these, there are lessons for the theatre in ritual and ceremonial. But what is gained in any rational discussion by extending the scope of a concept to comprehend almost all of reality ("all the world's a stage") so that any motor-car accident is equated with any Greek tragedy?

IT IS FROM THIS confusion about concepts and their definitions that the final *éclat* arose which rocketed the conference into the headlines of the popular press (and what a reflection that is on the popular press!). Kaprow and his compatriot and colleague, Kenneth Dewey, were invited to demonstrate their idea of theatre on the final day. Everyone involved knew about this. But most expected some form of *avant-garde* theatre, some sort of sketch or perhaps an improvised play. Hence their horror and, in some cases, genuine indignation, at the "happenings" that were actually performed (if that is the word). In themselves both these were harmless and amusing. Dewey champions predetermined actions which happen unexpectedly and stimulate the public through a series of shocks that force them to become part of the event. The sudden appearance of a nude in the hall—the equally sudden sally of Carroll Baker into the audience and into the arms of an ecstatic young man, while a piper strode along the gallery and the recorded voices of speakers from the previous days' proceedings resounded through the auditorium—all these events were part of a carefully composed sequence of shocks intended to form a very personal comment by

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the director on his reaction to Edinburgh itself and the conference. The intention certainly was to shock, to stimulate people whose emotions had ossified into fixed patterns, into indignation and rage. And that intention was certainly most successfully realised. But—was it theatre? Surely all this would be even more effective if it were staged not inside a hall, but in the open street, or in a nunnery, or in a factory? Kaprow's variant of the happening lacks this element of shock. *His* "happenings" are ritualistic; the participants are informed of every detail beforehand. In this case they were invited to take part in a solemn procession along a narrow, winding path strewn with discarded rubber tyres and flanked by grotesque symbolic figures: a secularised, surrealist ritual, clearly influenced by Zen ideas. Again—fascinating. But *theatre?*

THIS IS NOT to say, however, that these demonstrations were not fruitful as a contribution to a possible discussion that might have led to some definition of terms. In a way, Dewey and Kaprow were too successful. Their intention to shock succeeded so well that discussion ceased and made way for abuse. Even Tynan, who had fulfilled his role of chairman of the conference up till then with Olympian calm and detachment, lost his composure and revealed unsuspected depths of irrational anti-Americanism by claiming that the two short practical jokes had finally confirmed the decline of capitalism as predicted by Karl Marx—as well as the utter absence of real theatre in America which could, at best, boast of a few "entertainment booths" in the environs of Times Square, no more—and had therefore driven young directors into paroxysms of Dadaistic despair. (Alan Schneider, solid, sane, and utterly professional, restored the true perspective by calmly pointing out that not *all* American theatre people concentrated on Kaprow's and Dewey's brand of theatre, or even supported their views.) In any event—argument and genuine debate did not survive the shock of "the happenings."

In the days and weeks that followed, any mention that one had taken part in the International Drama Conference at Edinburgh automatically elicited, from old and young alike, from professors as well as charwomen, just one response: "So you were there when that Nude...?" Six days of intensive argument, hundreds of speeches, six Third Programme broadcasts, dozens of thoughtful press reports on the conference—all utterly obliterated by a forty-second apearance of a nude in a public place.... Is there significance here for our *Kultur*-critics?

Martin Esslin

International Commentary

Atlantic Dreams and Realities

By LORD GLADWYN

ONE OF THE most distressing effects of the Gaullist veto on our entry into the Common Market is that it has left all the countries of the Alliance, with the doubtful exception of France, without any generally agreed theory, at once coherent and feasible, about the future of our Western World. In particular, Britain remains in a state of dazed resentment. Unless there is strong and intelligent leadership, this may result in errors of policy—especially at a moment when the prospect of major negotiations with the Russians, excellent in itself, will obviously cast great strains on the Western Alliance.

The Prime Minister put it recently that we should be "firmly allied to power," which means (so he says) that "the United States must be on *our* side [my italics] in a relationship of partnership, not of subservience. Without the closest alliance between the U.S. and Britain, there is no Balance of Power." The conclusion is that

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we must retain our "independent deterrent," because without it we should indeed be in a "position of subservience" and could not take part, along with the Americans, in those all-important talks with the Russians which, if we are firm and do not lose our nerve, may well result in an enduring thaw in the Cold War and the establishment of a lasting peace among the nations.

This is a fine, robust thesis. It is infinitely preferable to a "Little England" policy of neutrality, primarily based on anti-Americanism and general xenophobia; to that of a "Third Force," including the U.K., which would really be based on anti-Americanism too; or even to an effort to set ourselves up as the "equal" of America by rallying a (politically) non-existent Commonwealth. It is certainly essential to maintain the Alliance and to preserve, even in the event of Disarmament, some balance of power as between East and West. On all this there would no doubt be very general agreement. The only question is whether a (very one-sided) Anglo-American "partnership" is the sole basis on which the Alliance can be maintained and the balance effected.

Sir Alec, for instance, did not refer to the uncomfortable fact that Britain's "independent deterrent" is not now completely independent, nor British, nor a deterrent, and that it will become less "credible" as time goes on. Nor did he in any way define our relationship to the Continent of Europe, and notably to France. Indeed, Europe was only mentioned incidentally as a place to trade with and make money in. The idea that there should be, or indeed that there could be, any real political unity in Europe is evidently not one which the Prime Minister takes into serious account. It even looks, from his broadcast of October 21st, as if he were opposed to the idea that we could ever join the Common Market, no matter what the "terms" might be. Even if this is not so, the attitude seems to be: there is nothing that we can do at the moment which will at once result in European political unity (which is patently true).

WHY THEREFORE TALK about it? It follows that de Gaulle must be allowed to do what he likes without any adverse reaction on our part, lest we "drive him into isolation." No doubt he will not be able to impose his own plan on Europe, but he will in no wise accept another. The E.E.C. will probably continue as a trading area, though it will clearly now have no political content; thus, there is no cause for alarm. When and if de Gaulle disappears, even if it is only in 1980, we might become less disinterested. In the meantime we can carry on very nicely (unless we lose our heads) as the chief and only reliable partner of America, and the continuing centre of our far-flung Commonwealth as well. I strongly suspect that this is also at the moment the general philosophy of the bulk of the Labour Party. Let us emulate de Gaulle and have no regard for the opinion of the foreigner, *"La Gran Bretagna farà da se."*

All this may seem sensible to many, but it is, I believe, a dangerous frame of mind. There is the risk, if by any chance the E.E.C. should break up, of a great increase of Soviet influence in Western Europe, which the Thaw is likely to encourage anyhow. Again, we should not be complacent about the chances of France eventually establishing some form of hegemony over the countries of the E.E.C. and creating a fairly independent "Third Force" with which we might eventually be forced to co-operate. The prospect of this happening will in any event be much greater if our friends on the Continent get the impression that Britain is now washing her hands of Europe and does not much care whether she comes into it or not. Any nation with a dominant idea, an *"idée maîtresse,"* has certain great advantages. What, then, are the ideas of some of our experts on foreign affairs? Are we thinking at all about long-term solutions?

THERE HAS RECENTLY been published by the Conservative Political Centre a pamphlet entitled *Atlantic Community: Dream and Reality*. Its authors believe that in present circumstances we ought to consider all possible solutions of our foreign political problems ranging from some "Atlantic Defence and Political Authority" to a "United Europe" and decide, for the moment, on nothing. They see no objection to "various horses being entered in the race, some of which may prove non-starters." Not knowing which horse to back, we should become passive spectators of events and leave the training and the betting to others. This seems to me to be misguided. The authors of the pamphlet are no doubt typical of the majority of intelligent people in Britain to-day: they have no policy because they have lost their way. And they have lost their way, as I believe, because they have not yet discerned and appreciated the fundamental underlying issues.

The principal political suggestion appears to be that attributed to General Norstad, and indeed apparently favoured by the Defence Committee of the Assembly of W.E.U., namely, there should be an "Executive Committee" of some Atlantic Ministerial Council, consisting of the U.S.A., the U.K., and France (or Western Germany, if France will not play), and that this Executive Committee should be empowered

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to take decisions by a simple majority vote—*i.e.*, two out of three—on matters of supreme importance, and notably on the threat or use of nuclear weapons. Hence, in theory, Western Germany, which has no nuclear capability, plus the U.K., which does not have very much, could prevent the U.S.A. from employing or threatening the use of its overwhelming nuclear power against, say, China. Equally, either the U.K. or France might, by its individual decision, and in conjunction with the U.S.A., commit all the rest of Europe to obliteration even if, rightly or wrongly, slavery should be preferred. It does not seem to me to be conceivable that such a proposal would ever be accepted by the U.S.A. or by the allies not represented in the "Executive Committee." Even if you set up an "Executive Committee" of four it would still be inconceivable that it could take decisions by majority vote, though of course it could be of use if its purpose were simply to define and determine the nuclear roles, if any, of the U.K. and France within the grand strategy of the Alliance. But that would simply mean that Germany should join the existing "Standing Group" in Washington. Unfortunately, it does not look as if such a proposal would be accepted by the present French Government, which would be likely to demand nuclear assistance before agreeing to co-operate.

APART FROM THIS rather extreme proposal, there is the suggestion that, in a general way, the "techniques" applied in the European Economic Community might equally be applied in the "Atlantic Community" (Commission, majority voting, international Court, etc.). There is certainly confusion here, perhaps through the use of the word "community" in two entirely different contexts. The E.E.C. is a constituted legal body in which given institutions have definite roles to play and in which certain decisions are taken by various kinds of majority vote. The so-called "Atlantic Community," on the other hand, exists, at present, purely in the imagination of political theorists, and even so it assumes many possible forms. The only institutions embracing some or all of the countries in the general North Atlantic area are NATO, O.E.C.D. and the "NATO Parliamentarians." The first two take decisions by way of unanimity, allowance being made for abstentions; the last takes no decisions at all. The reason for this is simple. Apart from the fact that O.E.C.D. includes the neutrals, when one member of an Alliance is almost as large in population as the rest and, in any case, richer and more powerful than all of them put together —and when it has a different political and indeed economic system and is separated by 3000 miles of ocean—it is not possible to imagine that it would accept majority decisions if such decisions were unpalatable, or positively objectionable, to a majority of the American people as represented in Congress. To assume the contrary, however vital the apparent political need for doing so, is to be guilty of woolly thinking. In other words, the "techniques" of the E.E.C. simply cannot be applied in the "Atlantic" sphere. Even in Europe they seem now to be in some danger of not succeeding.

The reason, *per contra*, why majority decisions, aided by devices such as a Commission *can*, if the various Governments so desire, be taken in the area of Western Europe is because the major countries in this area are contiguous; at more or less the same economic and sociological level; in size comparable; largely bound up together by history; successfully "disimperialized"; and for the most part common victims of the last World War. There is also a widespread feeling among these peoples that if they do not shortly come together in some physical way they will indeed, as General de Gaulle quite truthfully asserts, become permanent satellites of one Super-Power or the other.

THESE, THEREFORE, are the realities. It is no good skating over them by saying that the only hope is for everybody in the Free World to "unite" in some mystical sort of way; or that "we must have world-government or perish;" or that "interdependence"—a meaningless word if ever there was one—provides the key; or that we can only join the E.E.C. if the Six tear up the Treaty of Rome and allow it to be entirely re-drafted by Labour Party lawyers in the interests of British and New Zealand farmers; or that we can organise the Commonwealth, or parts of it, as a "Third Force." Still less that we can establish an "Atlantic Community" with a real political authority based on majority voting. The short point is that unless we can solve the European political problem first—and we can if we all try—we cannot make much progress with the strengthening of the Alliance. This issue is above party considerations in Britain and it may be that what I have to say will find some favour in all party-political quarters.

I would not assert, of course, that nothing whatever can be done for so long as we are excluded from Europe. We must do what is possible. We can, for instance, all work for progress in the "Kennedy Round" of Tariff Reductions which, if successful (it may well not be), would certainly take much of the edge off our present economic exclusion from the Common Market, which will get much more unpleasant as time goes on. We can make progress in

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O.E.C.D. with the tremendous problems of the disposal of agricultural surpluses and its allied question of aid to underdeveloped countries. We can form special provisional sub-committees to deal with these matters where, in the necessary default of a "Partnership" between "Europe" and America, the U.S.A., the E.E.C., and the U.K. might even be separately represented. We can help to take, in the World Bank, sensible decisions on monetary liquidity. We can work away in the "NATO Parliamentarians" body and perhaps even get it set up as some sort of (nominated) "Atlantic Assembly" with certain powers of recommendation. But we must clearly recognise that such measures are palliatives, and that there is still a danger of the Alliance foundering on the rocks of inflation, monetary policy, trade wars, bilateral "aid," reluctance to contribute towards common defence, conflicting foreign policies, ideological differences and, generally, all the ills to which unrestricted nationalism invariably gives rise. Only a real "partnership" between the U.S.A. and Europe—not only Britain—can avert such dangers: and it stands to reason that a "partnership" is impossible *until there is something in Europe for the U.S.A. to be a partner with.*

NOW IT IS QUITE APPARENT that the European solution on which many of us counted is not, thanks to present French nationalism, immediately attainable. It is even possible that this nationalism will result in the disruption of the E.E.C. itself. If it merely results in the continued exclusion of the U.K., it is probable that it will prevent the E.E.C. from ever functioning properly. But, if the E.E.C. really does fail to work, in the sense of producing a supra-national entity of some kind, we must realise that, failing some breakaway and lapse into neutralism on the part of one or more European states, or the willing acceptance by Continental Europe of a French hegemony, we should inevitably be reverting to the immediate post-war system—in which *all* the European members of the Alliance, including France (who might find it increasingly difficult to proceed with her present policy), are not only strategically, but also politically and economically, entirely dependent on America.

To put it bluntly, this is the system of the "American Empire," or, more accurately perhaps, of an American Protectorate over Western Europe, based primarily on the undeniable fact that 95 per cent of the nuclear power of the West is at the disposal of Washington. Thus, in the NATO Council the American viewpoint would, if it were insisted on, invariably prevail. Under such a system, the dollar would no doubt gradually become the unit of account and important negotiations with the East would be chiefly conducted through the State Department. It would undoubtedly be the most logical of all solutions of the "Atlantic problem"—what the Germans, for instance, might consider to be an inevitable *"weltgeschichtliche Tendenz."* It might even, *sub specie aeternitatis*, be the most desirable. It would be perfectly consonant with the formation of some (nominated) Atlantic Assembly; with an invigorated O.E.C.D. and with useful debates in the NATO Council. European agriculture would cease to be heavily protected. The U.S.A. in return would offer to take more European industrial goods. In spite of the "Balance of Terror," the retention of large U.S. forces in Europe would give some "credibility" to the American deterrent; there might well be a "mixed-manned" nuclear force; there would, no doubt in return for a large increase in the conventional forces of the European Allies, be active participation by these Allies in many strategic planning activities. The nuclear forces of the U.K. and France might be allotted some small special role to fit in with those of America —probably of "interdiction." Neither could, of course, be used without American permission. Preferably they would be abolished altogether.

Everything indeed would be lovely if it were not for one difficulty—it was largely because they did *not* want such a system that the European states went out after their own unity. Indeed it was presumably because we did not ourselves want it that we built up our own "independent deterrent." It seems, therefore, at least possible that one or more European State might not willingly accept such a system. If they did not and they were at the same time unwilling or unable to try to form some neutral "Third Force" under French hegemony—and nobody who has read M. René Courtin's last book called *L'Europe de l'Atlantique à l'Oural*, or indeed M. Roger Massip's splendid work on Gaullist policies will entirely discount the possibility of this happening—the weakness of a divided Europe could only play into the hands of the Soviet Union. We, for our part, might have less objection since we might calculate that if the E.E.C. breaks up, we could count on maintaining, or perhaps reviving, our famous "special relationship" with America. That is true, but only true in the sense that we should have to contemplate some eventual merger with America—the "Oceania" of Orwell's imagination. Otherwise we might easily find that Germany was the "senior partner." In any case, the "American Empire" is clearly not Sir Alec Douglas-Home's objective, nor would it be very likely to appeal to a majority of the nation, any more than would a

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policy of insularity, or neutralism, or "positive friendship" with the Soviet Union. As a matter of fact it is probably the last thing that an American himself would desire. The Imperial Crown would press heavily on that uneasy head.

ASSUMING, HOWEVER, that General de Gaulle's veto is somehow lifted and that he agrees to our entry into the E.E.C., perhaps on some terms providing for joint control or co-ordination of the British and French nuclear "deterrents," or that, possibly, in the next year or two we have a Labour Government here and "like-minded" administrations in most of Western Europe, what then? This is the question with which we should really be occupying ourselves rather than with the distressing sex-life of Miss Keeler or the great train robberies.

For if in, say, a year from now the political situation in all Western Europe changes, it is surely desirable for at any rate the politically educated to have some idea about how the changed situation could most profitably be put to our national advantage, and exactly what the political opportunities could be. Let us assume, then, that in a general way the "political will" to unite Western Europe further (as Mr. Edward Heath says) exists at the beginning of 1965. How could it most profitably be manifested? And might it not well be desirable to get agreement on the main lines of political unity first? Why should not even the governments who are so minded even begin discussing unofficially now what sort of a "Political Community" they would all be prepared to accept? Nothing would be lost by the attempt. If the French stand out of such discussions it would be too bad; but there would be no suggestion that anything would be decided "over their heads." If there is ever to be any unity in Western Europe, it can only be with willing French co-operation. Our general object should be to demonstrate to General de Gaulle and to the whole French nation that Britain is genuine in her desire to enter Europe as an equal with France and that, consequently, a French policy of nuclear isolation is one which should not, indeed cannot, be allowed to pay.

THERE IS ONE preliminary danger here. More especially, perhaps, if there are vaguely "Left-wing" governments in power in the major countries of Western Europe, including Britain, there may be a tendency for those who advocate a completely "democratic" solution of the problem of European unity to rush the governments into taking the famous *saltus mortalis* at once. I refer, of course, to the organisation of direct elections, irrespective of nationality, of the members of the European Parliament in Strasbourg. It must be evident that if these "Super-Parliamentarians" emerge they will want, as representatives of the sovereign peoples, to assert themselves. But if they try to do so, still more if they try to create what really would be a Super-Government drawn from their ranks, they will inevitably come into conflict with national Parliaments and Governments. Can we imagine, in the present state of feeling in Britain, even a Labour Government being able to persuade the trade unions to accept the verdict, not of some Council on which that Government would after all be represented as a Government, but of a Super-Government based on a Chamber which would inevitably absorb all the real powers of the Parliament of Westminster? Can we visualise Continent-wide elections for a President of Europe entirely regardless of nationality? And what progress might not the Tory opposition make with the British electorate in such an event? The same considerations might well, in spite of the enthusiasm of the extreme Federalists, apply in other countries. In all probability, some too hurried essay in complete international democracy would peter out in frustration and despair. It would be the *"Paulskirche"* of 1848 all over again. After all, theories which may have made sense when Europe was in a state of collapse are not necessarily applicable when individual nations have recovered their confidence and their prosperity.

I repeat, therefore, that it is not too soon even now at least to try to agree, as between sincerely convinced "Europeans" in Britain and those on the Continent, the great bulk of whom still wish Britain to join the E.E.C.—provided only she accepts that certain decisions even in the fields of foreign affairs and defence should be taken in common—on the broad lines of some political union which might be entered into for, say, five years, after which it would be re-negotiated. "Europe" cannot exist much longer in a state of suspended political animation: she must go forward or back. But if she is to go forward there must be some attempt to grapple with even the most serious political and defence problems from the start. Unless this is admitted, there is little point in pursuing the idea of European political unity any further.

After all, the new Government in power in the U.K. early in 1965, especially if it is a Labour Government, will have to face political realities: one of which is that, failing general disarmament, it will not be able simply to scrap the nuclear power which will be at its disposal any more than will some left-of-centre government that may by that time be in command of the destinies of France. Some machine will consequently first have to be established (and it is becoming pretty obvious that it ought to be

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established here and now) which will at least co-ordinate, and possibly even amalgamate, these two forces within the general framework of the Western Alliance. One day, they might, if the world situation permits, both be scrapped by mutual agreement; or they could be reduced; or even in the event of the worst happening and the Americans threatening to withdraw from Europe, they might possibly be increased. It follows too that, for so long as the Alliance continues and the American Army remains in Europe, they will not be let off, on a first strike, except with American consent. Nor, of course, should American nuclear force be applied in Europe without some kind of European consent either. *The essential thing, therefore, is to have some European institution to consider political and strategic matters*, and notably the great and overriding nuclear problem which increasingly darkens the skies of Europe. We cannot avoid this problem by an ostrich-like policy of refusing to contemplate even a discussion, between friends, of political institutions now. For, whether we like it or not, we shall shortly be forced to do so by the simple logic of events.

WHAT, THEN, could the institutions be? At the moment they could in practice only be inter-governmental, and here the so-called "techniques" of the E.E.C. might be put to work. Thus, from the outset, decisions in certain defined categories of subjects—*e.g.*, standardisation of armaments and the allotment of major contracts for armaments—might be taken by some kind of majority vote in which even a Great Power could find itself in a minority. On other defence matters, and on foreign affairs, there would no doubt, for a period of years at any rate, have to be unanimity as among the four larger members. But it is wrong, as I see it, to argue, as is fashionable now, "no President of Europe—no credible European Deterrent—*ergo* no Europe...." The essential principle should be that the new European Political and Defence Community should be, not "independent" but "autonomous," even in the nuclear sphere. To be effective it would probably have to form some "Executive Committee" of the four larger powers with co-opted representatives of the small ones. It should seek to put its own house in order first, determine economic priorities, decide on how much each member should contribute in men and money to the common cause, and then, as a whole, discuss with the Americans in the Council of NATO how the general European effort could best be fitted into the master plan. Then, and only then, would NATO spring into effective life. All the ground—and of course education and what is known as "culture" should come in too—would be suitably prepared by an independent Commission whose Chairman would always sit in the Council of Ministers, the Secretariat of which he might very well provide. If he were a Hammarskjöld type he might even in course of time come to be a sort of "European Conscience." At the same time the present (nominated) European Parliament could be given greater responsibilities and enabled to exert an effective influence both on the Commission and on the members themselves. It seems to me that our acceptance of such a scheme would have an electrifying effect on the other side of the Channel, and that it would certainly provide the best, and perhaps even the only valid means of harnessing firmly to the West the energies and the hopes of the German nation.

THERE IS NO REASON why such a system—which would, of course, have to comprise the Six plus Britain and the three other "candidates" for the E.E.C.—should not provide, broadly speaking, that essential core of unity on which a real "Partnership" with America could be based. It could, of course, involve the scrapping of the existing "Western European Union" and its replacement by something on the lines suggested. For its part the Council of Europe would no doubt carry on, but since politics and defence are rigorously excluded, and there is no question of any kind of majority vote, it is evident that it might be in danger of fading out if any dynamic European Political Union were created alongside it.

I myself earnestly hope, therefore, that some such scheme will recommend itself at least to the European Movement in this and other countries. Nothing could be better calculated to hearten our friends in Europe and give them the impression that the European idea is still alive in this country and that, whatever the shock occasioned by the General's veto, an "outward-looking" but autonomous Europe within the Western Alliance is still what the British people really prefer, or at any rate what they would prefer if they appreciated the nature of the various alternatives.

The whole point is this. Wrong though the General was to veto our entry into the E.E.C., horrible though the prospects are if he gets away (and he may) with his cherished counter-project of forming a Europe "from the Atlantic to the Urals" (*i.e.*, a deal between a French-led E.E.C. and the Soviet Union about the future of Germany), it is useless for us to protest and lament unless we have an intellectually valid political project of our own. Nor is it any good saying that we believe in basing the Alliance on some real association between Europe and

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America unless we first have a clear idea of what "Europe" is to be. If we are honest with ourselves, we must also admit that our failure to grasp this political fact was one of the reasons why the General was able to play his fatal card with comparative impunity. Whatever may be said of de Gaulle, his actions are logical, even though, as I feel, his reasons bear little relation to the age in which we live.

It is therefore useless, indeed it is worse than useless to run after him holding out concessions on this or that—even nuclear concessions, though no doubt he might graciously accept any assistance here if given without any strings at all—until and unless there is in existence a political alternative to his own preferred *"Europe des Etats."* It must be an alternative which makes intellectual sense and which has some chance of being accepted by all the interested European governments including, obviously, the British Government. The General, it is true, might not accept it; though clearly something on the lines which I have outlined is much nearer his own thought than proposals for a "Federal Union" which is as repugnant to him as it would be to the great majority of the British. We can all here sympathise with his mistrust of such solutions, and even for his mistrust of some vague "Atlantica" which might turn out to be a "Pentagonia" if it were anything at all. But the General does know a brick wall when he sees one. If it were apparent that the only way to avoid the complete isolation of France was to form a European political association with his neighbours, including an *"Angleterre"* which, though insisting on the prior claims of the Western Alliance, was not claiming a position in any way superior to that of France, then I myself believe that it is not impossible that he would agree to co-operate. But first it is for all France's neighbours, and indeed for many Frenchmen too, who object to the policy of the General, to agree on the nature of the political union which they would desire to establish and to make it abundantly clear that they would prefer this to the apparent pursuit, in this dangerous nuclear age, of the political aims of Jeanne d'Arc, Louis XIV, and even, let us face it, of the great Napoleon.

In the meantime, beyond what has already been mentioned, not very much can be done to strengthen the Western Alliance and what can be done is probably already being done. The Multilateral Force, though it may indeed be politically desirable in view of French intransigence, is not, it seems to me, in itself going to provide the answer. However useful it may be for getting money out of the Europeans for nuclear defence; for helping American industry through the sale of Polaris missiles; for giving the Germans the illusion that they have "a finger on a button;" or for putting General de Gaulle in a nasty fix, the fact is that, even if it eventually works, it will not add substantially to the present American deterrent. Nor indeed, in view of the assurance now given the Russians to the effect that with so many buttons it is never likely to be employed at all, is it even calculated to "deter" them greatly. If, some day, it were put at the disposal of a European Political and Defence Authority it might make real sense. But until the question of "the button" is satisfactorily solved it cannot be said to be anything but a specialised projection of American power designed to accomplish certain limited political purposes. In other words, if the preferred solution is the "American Empire" it is not strategically necessary, and if the objective is still a Partnership it will not in itself bring such a Partnership about.

My conclusions:

1. We should strengthen the Alliance by building up O.E.C.D. and the Nato Parliamentarians as much as we can. We should continue to assert that the Alliance, and the Alliance only, is the rock on which our safety must continue to rest. But we must recognise that it is in actual danger until we have solved the great question of Britain's relationship to Western Europe—and until France has abandoned her effort to unify Europe on the sole basis of French nuclear power.

2. Unless we hold that the correct ultimate solution, capable of acceptance by ourselves and by the Western European nations, is something on the lines of what I have called the "American Empire," we must still seek to achieve a "Partnership" between the United States and some democratic "autonomous" politico-economic European equivalent of America, including Britain, based, at the outset at any rate, on "Community" principles, including that of majority voting in certain gradually increasing spheres.

3. If this should come to be the considered view of specialists, irrespective of Party, it would be advisable to promote it gradually, so that the country might be prepared for new moves when and if these become possible after the next General Election. There would then be no reason why Her Majesty's Government and other well-disposed Governments should not take part in discussions with a view to constituting some European Political and Defence Authority even before our entrance (and that of others) into the European Economic Community.

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Vietnamese Notebook

Martial Law

THE TAXI weaved its way precariously through the dense ill-disciplined traffic, hooting loudly as it avoided collisions by a hairbreadth. Tanks were stationed at the sides of streets, and soldiers held their automatic weapons at the ready. Military trucks were transporting groups of heavily armed, steel-helmeted troops on continuous patrols through the city. Martial law had been proclaimed a day before. I tried to pay an immediate call upon an old friend for a first-hand account of the recent events: the editor of Saigon's leading newspaper. I paid off my taxi and walked through the open door of his house. The room was in a state of chaotic disorder. In the centre of it sat my friend's widowed sister, her daughter and son-in-law, the two women weeping. "Where's Tuyen?" (Tuyen is not his real name, but it will do.) The older woman made an effort to control her tears and rose to greet me. "If only you'd come yesterday," she sobbed, "you could have seen him. A band of Special Forces soldiers came to the house at two o'clock this morning and dragged him out of bed. When he asked them what it was all about, they told him to shut up and hustled him into their truck outside. Then they ransacked the whole house and carried off all his papers. I tried to find out to-day what had happened to him, but nobody knew. The soldiers made no charge, produced no warrant, and wouldn't answer any questions. I don't know where he is or what they're doing to him. Oh, if only I knew what's going to happen to him!" Tears once more.

After doing my inadequate best to comfort them, I promised to pass on any information that came my way and quickly left. It is not a good thing for an arrested man in Vietnam if foreign visitors should be seen going to his house, and certainly not in the atmosphere of martial law. Early the following morning I made my way to the offices of his newspaper. Outside stood armed soldiers. From them I learned that the entire editorial staff had been arrested—they didn't know the reason—and the paper closed down. The interior of the building was a shambles of smashed cupboards, overturned chairs, and scattered sheets of paper. Further back stood the wreckage of the printing machines, broken up with heavy hammers or explosives. (During the whole of my stay in Vietnam I failed to discover why the arrests had been made or where the prisoners were being held.)

Lest readers imagine that these men might have been guilty of "aiding the Communist insurgents," I should record that all of those arrested had come as refugees from the Communist north in the exodus of 1954 and that Tuyen himself is a devout Roman Catholic.

P. J. HONEY, *lecturer at the University of London, is a well-known scholar in the field of South-East Asian history and languages. He has recently completed a study of Vietnam politics in the light of the Sino-Soviet conflict, and has just returned from Saigon. His article was, of course, written before the recent revolutionary events.*

The Professor

"WHEN YOU REACH my age you have long since ceased to be a revolutionary," said the grey-haired professor puffing nervously at his cigarette. "You've become established in your profession, you've selected your circle of friends, and you positively enjoy the regular daily routine you've worked out for yourself. Your children are growing up and about to make their start in the world, so you begin to plan your life without them, a quieter life in which your research plays a more important part than before. The last thing you want is change, so that you tend to support the existing order of things, and find yourself making allowances or excuses for all its shortcomings...."

We talked on that hot evening in the sitting room of the professor's house in Saigon. Like many university dons the world over, he had remained behind to teach after a brilliant student career, and in the sheltered academic atmosphere had been able to stand apart from the military and political convulsions through which his country had passed. His life had been comfortable even if his salary had never been quite sufficient to provide for his family all the things he would have wished. He had worked hard, published his research, and achieved a modest renown among specialist scholars at work in his own field. The future seemed assured. He had not won the international reputation of which he had dreamed during his student years, but he had no reason to feel ashamed of a reasonably successful and useful life and he enjoyed the respect of his colleagues. Now, suddenly, all his plans were wrecked and he was obliged to make the most important decision of his life.

After the Republic of Vietnam (better known to the outside world as "South Vietnam") had won her independence in 1954, Ngo Dinh Diem smashed the armed politico-religious sects which opposed his government and dismissed the nominal Head of State, ex-Emperor Bao Dai.

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A liberal constitution was promulgated and a national parliament was elected. South Vietnam appeared ready to take her place among the independent nations of the world under the benevolent leadership of President Diem, and generous American economic aid was helping to raise living standards. The only cloud on the horizon was subversion by Communists owing loyalty to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (or "North Vietnam").

Somehow things had gone wrong. In the name of "defeating Communism" President Diem had flouted the constitution and turned his régime into an authoritarian, single-party government. The national parliament was reduced to little more than a rubber stamp and all political opposition was ruthlessly suppressed. The press and radio were strictly controlled by government officials, until neither dared to express even the mildest criticism of the régime. Dissenters who challenged the behaviour of the government were arrested and imprisoned, often after trials which appeared to leave much to be desired. But the President explained that all of this was necessary because criticism and dissent, while admirable in settled and secure democracies, would in South Vietnam simply interfere with the struggle to overcome the Communist menace. The professor and countless other Vietnamese told one another that there was something in what the President had said. Moreover, the United States, which was helping Vietnam in so many ways, had made no protest, and she was perhaps the most liberal democratic state in the Free World. So nothing was done and consciences were stilled by facile rationalisation.

In order to combat Communism, the Ngo Dinh Diem régime made more and more use of Communist techniques. South Vietnam was plastered with ridiculous slogans. Many of them expressed "popular gratitude" to President Diem for all he had done. People were pressed to join a mass political party supporting Diem (the "Movement of National Revolution") and to attend countless meetings. Civil servants were high-pressured, and even peasants were obliged to join (in order to qualify for the benefits bestowed by agricultural co-operatives, e.g., cheap seed and fertilizer). With this organisation of control once established, it was not difficult to "rig" elections for the national parliament. A new bastard philosophy was created, "Personalism," which was said to combine "the best of Confucianism with the best of Roman Catholicism," and was foisted on the people. A semi-clandestine Personalist political party was set up, embodying many features of the Communist Party, and became a power in the land. Still nobody protested publicly, although many grew uneasy and voiced their apprehensions to close friends in the secrecy of their homes.

In the second half of 1959 the Communist insurgents rapidly increased their numbers and their activities. They turned a minor campaign of subversion into a full-scale guerilla war. Insecurity spread throughout the countryside. The United States increased its military assistance to meet the new threat, and more and more young Vietnamese were conscripted into the army. Ugly rumours of corruption on a massive scale spread rapidly among the people —and were believed. President Diem himself enjoyed a wide reputation for personal honesty and integrity. The blame did not attach to him but rather to his brother Ngo Dinh Nhu and the latter's wife. By this time people had ceased to try to rationalise their acceptance; instead they shrugged their shoulders and protested to one another that they, as individuals, were powerless to stop the process.

Unparalleled inefficiency in the civil service —few Vietnamese had any experience of administration under the French régime, so that it was scarcely surprising that they knew little about their new jobs—exasperated the general public. But complaint was no longer possible: because it would reflect "discredit" on the régime and would be construed as "treason." Popular frustration grew and, in November 1960, three battalions of parachute troops attempted a military *coup d'état*. But the attempt failed, and thereafter the army too was under suspicion. Generals were paid large sums of money to ensure their loyalty, but individual units were isolated from one another and could only communicate via the Presidency. Undercover agents were infiltrated into military formations to report on what was done and said. Morale sagged. The war against the Communists suffered, too, because of the mistrust, yet a fresh *coup d'état* became almost impossible to organise. One day two young air force pilots took off to attack Communist positions and proceeded to drop their bombs on the President's palace. (They destroyed the building, but President Diem, Ngo Dinh Nhu, and Madame Nhu escaped unscathed.) The result was further arrests, suspicion, and supervision of the armed forces.

The uneasy calm endured until May, 1963, when the stupidity of some local officials in the old imperial capital city of Hue provoked disturbances during a Buddhist procession which led to the death of eleven Buddhists. Outraged Buddhists in Hue and elsewhere refused to be cowed and protested vigorously.

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The reaction seemed to take the authorities by surprise. Soon the latent discontent throughout the country crystallised around this nucleus of resistance. Hunger strikes, demonstrations, political speech-making, and the rest followed. President Diem wavered in his handling of the crisis and was uncertain how to overcome it, and the opposition movement grew rapidly.

What a shock it was when an elderly Buddhist monk soaked his clothing in petrol and burned himself publicly as a gesture of protest! Pagodas became centres of opposition and men dressed in monkish robes—not all of them, I am convinced, were real monks—harangued the crowds assembled outside with political speeches. For a time it seemed as though the situation had outstripped government attempts to control it. Then, late in August, Special Forces troops raided some 2,000 pagodas in a single night. Monks and nuns were arrested, and those who resisted were roughly handled. The opposition movement in the Pagodas had undoubtedly been smashed, but only at the cost of disturbing the conscience of every Vietnamese no matter what his religious denomination. Whatever political advantage might accrue, the irruption of armed troops into sacred buildings and the physical maltreatment of religious men and women were acts which few Vietnamese could either condone or forgive. It may well prove to have lost President Diem his right to rule.

Public demonstrations followed, in which university students and schoolchildren joined. Many of them were arrested. I saw distraught parents roaming the streets of Saigon, questioning passers-by in the hope of gleaning some clue to the fate or whereabouts of their missing children. The government reacted by imposing martial law and by closing the universities and schools.

AT THIS POINT I want to return to the elderly professor and the agonising decision he had to make.

"A group of my students came to see me here at home," he went on. "We discussed the rights and wrongs of the situation. Does the end of defeating Communism justify the means President Diem is employing to achieve it, they asked me, and at what point is the subject morally obliged to rebel against his rulers? Were they justified in demonstrating against the President? And would they not be bound to do so again when the universities re-opened—even if this meant suffering imprisonment and causing anxiety to their parents? How far should anyone condone what he knew to be wrong in order to defeat another wrong?

"The discussion continued along these lines for some time, then at last one of the students asked me whether or not I believed in those philosophers to whose teachings I had introduced the students in my lectures. If I really believed in what I taught, was I not under a moral obligation publicly to demonstrate my disapproval of the government's acts by joining the students on the streets when the university was reopened? If I did not believe, then what right did I have to expound these philosophies to the students?"

"Since then," he said, "I have devoted much thought to the problem. The boy was absolutely right. It's all too easy to assess philosophical theses in the abstract, to approve or disapprove of them on the grounds of logic, or ethics, or morals, without ever relating their teachings to one's own life. This time, however, I must make my decision. I must choose between certain imprisonment, the loss of my livelihood with all the suffering that entails for my family, the possibility of being wounded or even killed—and the abandonment of all I have said or written in the course of my adult life, the loss of own self-respect and the respect of my students past and present. Under the circumstances, I have no option but to register my protest and take the consequences. If I were to do otherwise, my only other course would be to drink or to commit suicide. How could I continue my existence once I had sacrificed my self-respect? When the university reopens, I am determined to demonstrate with my students against the government. My one regret is that I have left my protest so late. I haven't discussed this with my colleagues. I'm confident that they will arrive at the same conclusion as I have."

Walking down the garden towards the gate, I glanced back over my shoulder at the slight stooping figure framed in the light of the window, a man of letters not of action, apprehensive, even frightened.

The British

"IT'S ENOUGH to try the patience of a saint," said the tall bronzed Englishman, thrusting himself forward in his armchair as though to emphasise his annoyance. "When I first came to South Vietnam, the situation in Saigon and the other big towns was calm and everything seemed to be more or less under control. You heard grumbling, of course, like anywhere else. But there weren't any disorders and everyone seemed to be getting on with his job peacefully enough.... Out in the countryside, though, things were very different. The people there were fair game for the Communist guerillas, living in scattered villages and isolated

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farms. A gang of Viet Cong could walk in whatever night they chose, terrify the farmers by waving guns under their noses, and walk off with as much rice and anything else as they wanted. Sometimes they'd make political speeches at them, or force them to dig up a stretch of road to hold up traffic. As often as not when that happened, the same poor devils would be dragged out by the government troops to fill in the holes they'd had to dig the night before. Unless the Communists were unlucky enough to run into a patrol, they had everything their own way. When they wanted more recruits, they'd round up some of the country lads and march off with them....

"Everyone used to blame the farmers and villagers for not giving information to the government troops about the whereabouts of the Viet Cong, or give them rousing speeches about how it was their patriotic duty to pass on all the information that came their way. But when anyone did give information, back came the Viet Cong at the first opportunity and blew off his head, plus the heads of his neighbours for good measure. I tell you I'd have kept my mouth shut if I'd been in their place. I don't think any government or army has the right to ask its people for information unless it can protect them afterwards. And the Vietnamese government couldn't do that. It took a long time, but eventually Britain was asked how she'd beaten the Communist rebels in Malaya under conditions similar to those in Vietnam. That's where we came in....

"The beginning was hard because we had to sell the Vietnamese government the idea of 'defended villages,' and they weren't too receptive. But we overcame that hurdle and, as you can see to-day, they call them 'strategic hamlets' and have convinced themselves it was their own idea in the first place. Once they accepted the idea, they wanted to push ahead too fast. We had to hold them back. They're so keen now that they want to put the whole country in strategic hamlets. In spite of all the mistakes that were made, the hamlets are working extremely well and are proving their worth against the Communists. Of course the Americans have done wonders in providing arms to defend them and in supplying every hamlet with a radio transmitter for calling up help when it is attacked. They've brought in lots of helicopters, so that the reinforcements can hop over ambushes and get to where they're needed at top speed. The Communists simply can't stop troop movements now like they used to do against the French....

"Areas of the countryside where the Viet Cong had things pretty well their own way were covered with strategic hamlets once the programme got started. The results were remarkable. Peasant farmers felt more secure behind their barricades and when the Communists came for food they drove them off with gunfire. Information began to flow in, too, and soon the Viet Cong found themselves in trouble. They concentrated their attacks on the hamlets and even destroyed some of them. But most of the time reinforcements would arrive and inflict heavy casualties on the attackers. More and more Viet Cong had to be withdrawn to the rear areas and put to work on growing their own food. Our chemical defoliants sprayed from aircraft killed what they grew and must have broken their hearts. Communist morale began to fall, and the number of surrenders climbed steeply.... If you want any confirmation about how well we were doing you have only to look at the North Vietnamese newspapers and read the propaganda attacks appearing daily against strategic hamlets. The Viet Cong even announced they were setting up strategic hamlets in the areas under their control. As for the chemical defoliants, well they whipped up an international campaign against them, with local Communist Parties claiming they were poison gas and well-meaning lunatics who'd never been to Vietnam in their lives, to say nothing of inspecting the effect of the spray on crops, signing petitions of protest to all and sundry....

"Yes, we have the Communists on the run all right. By last April I'd proved to my own satisfaction that the strategic hamlets were the complete counter to Communist guerilla tactics. We were over the top of the hill, and the end of the war was only a matter of time. Then in May, these Buddhist troubles blew up and the political situation went to pieces. Since then it's got progressively worse and is threatening our success against the Viet Cong. Make no mistake about it, these young Vietnamese soldiers are good and as keen as a razor. They want to get rid of the Communists so that they can settle down to a regular job. But lots of them have relatives in the cities where all the trouble is, and they're worried about them. You can't fight Communists if you're looking over your shoulder all the time wondering whether your parents are all right....

"Now I don't know much about the ins-and-outs of Vietnamese politics. My job is to beat the Communist guerillas. Maybe the Buddhists have got a case, and maybe all these demonstrators are right. What I do know is that they're going to undo all our good work if they don't settle their differences quickly. It's none of my business whether the Vietnamese want to change their government or not, but I wish to heaven they would do whatever they

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want to quickly and then settle down again to the job of wiping out the insurgents....

"When I first arrived the cities and towns were all right and the countryside was in a mess. And now—we've cleared up the countryside and the cities have gone bad...."

The Refugee

"I'M SORRY about the delay, but the traffic is always terrible at this time," said the taxi driver as we stopped yet again, hemmed in by a sea of cars outside Saigon's central market during the height of the midday rush hour. He spoke with the unmistakable accents of North Vietnam, though his intimate knowledge of the Saigon streets suggested that he had lived in that city for some years. "When did you come to the south," I asked, "with all the refugees in 1954?"

"Yes—though most of my family decided to stay in Hanoi and take their chance with the Communists."

"And how do you like it down here? Have you settled in by now?" His answer was the long catalogue of complaints against the régime of President Ngo Dinh Diem which had become so familiar—oppression, official corruption, rigged elections, arbitrary arrests, press censorship, political re-education camps, etc. etc.

"Supposing you had known in 1954 what South Vietnam was going to be like, would you have come down or would you have stayed in the north?" I expected a quick unacademic reply, and I was mildly surprised by the long pause.

"I'm one of the lucky ones. I've been able to exchange a lot of letters with my relatives in the north. So I have a pretty good idea what things are like there. Unlike most of the people in Saigon, I don't imagine it's paradise there simply because it isn't ruled by Ngo Dinh Diem. A lot of Saigonese listen to the Hanoi broadcasts and swallow the northern propaganda whole. But I know what's happening....

"If I'd stayed in the north, I'd now be working in one of their agricultural co-operatives. Possibly in one of the new ones they are trying to start up in the mountains among the tribesmen. I'd have to spend all day out in the fields with some bullying *cadre* who knew even less about agriculture than I do, standing over me telling me what to do. In the evenings, instead of relaxing I'd be forced to attend political education classes with another *cadre* telling me what I could and could not think. On Sundays they'd have me out there again doing 'voluntary' labour on digging ditches or repairing roads. I'd have very little money to spend and I'd be starving all the time on their tiny food ration. Now I'm a fellow who hates being pushed around by anyone, which is why I drive a taxi. I don't make much money, but I'm my own boss and I do as I please. I like to do my own thinking too, and not to be told what's going on by some smart alec who has crawled to one of the bigwigs and wormed his way in the Communist Party. Here in Saigon they leave me pretty much alone. Besides I have plenty to eat and so do my children. This régime down here is pretty rotten, as I've already told you, but there are plenty of compensations....

"It's a funny thing, and I've never thought about it before. But I'm sure that if I'd known in 1954 what I know now about the two halves of Vietnam, I'd still have decided to come to the South."

North Vietnam

GROSSLY OVERPOPULATED in relation to the area of agricultural land—most of the terrain is mountainous—North Vietnam possesses the bulk of the country's meagre industry and mineral deposits. When Ho Chi Minh's Communist régime took over the government of the area in 1954, it was clear to all that the greatest problem would be to feed the people. During the period of French domination there was no difficulty because the North's food deficit was made good from the South's large rice surplus. But the division of Vietnam into two mutually hostile states ended all trade between the two halves. Moreover, Ho Chi Minh had become dependent upon China for his military supplies to defeat the French, and he still relied heavily upon his powerful neighbour for assistance even after victory. Consequently, he had to submit to a large measure of Chinese direction of affairs in North Vietnam and to fashion "Communism on the Chinese model." The Maoist land reforms were disastrous. Thousands of innocent Vietnamese were brutally murdered by the people's courts, and a national uprising was averted only by the hasty introduction of a "correction of errors" campaign and the Chinese "Hundred Flowers" (in which intellectuals were invited to criticise the régime and did so to such effect that they almost toppled it). Ho tried to offset Chinese influence with Soviet.

Reduced to its simplest terms, Ho's economic plan was this: industrialise rapidly, sell industrial products abroad, and buy food with the foreign currency earned. The plan necessitated remaining on good terms with both Russia and China. Only Russia and her European satellites could supply the machines necessary for in-

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dustrialisation while China's size and proximity made her a major threat to North Vietnam if ever that tiny state should displease the Chinese. But industrialisation was ill-planned and badly executed. Even the few industrial products achieved proved unsaleable (mainly because of the inexperience of the Vietnamese workers and the incompetence of managers who were appointed on grounds of political reliability rather than aptitude for the job). However, harvests in the early years were fairly good and the population was kept alive even if rations were only slightly above starvation level.

1960 marked the beginning of a series of bad harvests, and the small reserves of rice soon became depleted. Deaths from starvation became more and more common though they never appeared in the official statistics. Black markets sprang up, selling meat from illicitly slaughtered buffaloes and pigs, and, although they helped temporarily, the long-term effects were damaging. Co-operatives became short of draught animals and heavy jobs such as ploughing had to be done by hand. So bad was the situation in 1962 that a government decree ordered all soldiers, civil servants, policemen, and schoolchildren to grow food in every piece of vacant land in and around their places of work. To ensure that they did so, their rations were reduced still further.

If the food situation was bad, the political situation was no better. With the widening of the rift between China and Russia, North Vietnam's task of maintaining friendly relations with both grew increasingly difficult. Only Ho Chi Minh's consummate political skill contrived to hold a balance, moving now closer to China and now to the Soviet Union—but never far enough to antagonise either. By some miracle he contrived to steer his country through the crises of Cuba and the Chinese attack on India. The two Communist giants continued to engage in mutual recriminations, and Ho Chi Minh managed to get by without taking sides. He struggled desperately to avert a formal break between China and Russia because that would force him to take the ultimate ideological decision. It was the partial nuclear test ban which finally forced the issue. The Russians demanded that North Vietnam should sign it; China was no less insistent that she refuse. Decisive action could no longer be postponed and, after much thought, Ho Chi Minh declared that his country refused to sign. He had offended the Soviet Union and aligned himself with China. Now he awaits the economic consequences of his action.

Meanwhile, the main rice harvest of 1963 has failed disastrously and reports indicate that up to 50% has been lost. At the present moment North Vietnam has not enough rice to feed her people until the next harvest, and this at a time when Soviet economic aid may be cut off. In desperation Ho Chi Minh sent a Vietnamese representative along with the Chinese team to negotiate in Hong Kong for the purchase of Australian wheat. The attempt was unsuccessful. North Vietnam was unable to offer any form of payment acceptable to the Australians.

Earlier hopes of a quick victory in the guerilla war to annex South Vietnam (which would have assured control over more than adequate rice supplies) have been now dashed. During 1963 the fighting has clearly gone against the Communists. The morale has dropped and many Communists have surrendered. Ho sought to secure by political cunning what he could not win by force of arms. He exploited French resentment over American influence in South Vietnam to transmit generous proposals to the South Vietnamese government for "an end to the fighting" and a "neutralisation of the south." When news of these approaches leaked out and was published in the United States, the chances of their success waned. I believe it is now certain that they have failed.

To-day North Vietnam is face-to-face with the grimmest and most important crisis of her brief existence. Failure to overcome the food shortage means a large-scale famine, for China has no rice to spare—and the remaining Communist countries are unlikely to help a state siding with China in the dispute (even if they were able to do so). Every solution seems to have been tried already—and to have failed. For the people of North Vietnam the future has never loomed so menacingly.

The French

"In no other part of the world can French cynicism have attained the proportions it did in Vietnam. There must be something in the atmosphere here which encourages its growth. Why, I remember back in 1955, when Ngo Dinh Diem was struggling desperately against the threat of the politico-religious sects and the Binh Xuyen bandits, the senior French officials here put into effect a plan to overthrow the government and to replace it with one led by Bay Vien, the Binh Xuyen leader. They argued that, after the defeat at Dien Bien Phu and the outcome of the Geneva conference, Vietnam was lost to France anyway—so what the hell. Bay Vien and some of his men could probably hold the place for

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six months or so before the Communists took over. In that time the French would be able to liquidate some of their investments and fill their pockets with anything else they could get their hands on. Oh, certainly they regretted that South Vietnam would become Communist, but since that was inevitable anyhow, the realist would collect what he could before the evil day arrived. The scheme would run down the country economically as well, and give the Communists more to do when they came in. But Ngo Dinh Diem dug his heels in and used his army. And weren't those Frenchmen furious when he came out on top! You should have been here to listen to them...."

While he spoke, the American newspaper columnist smoked one cigarette after another and sipped an iced lemon drink. We sat in an air-conditioned room of the Majestic Hotel at Saigon. He had just returned from interviewing the President and Ngo Dinh Nhu and was incensed over the latest French moves in Vietnam.

"I can understand French resentment against the growing American influence in their former colony, but why try to make themselves feel better by taking it out on the Vietnamese and pushing them under Communist rule? The President told me that Lalouette, the French Ambassador, had brought the head of the French mission in Hanoi to meet him. Straightaway this fellow told the President how Ho Chi Minh apologised for all the rude things the North Vietnamese had said about him in the past. They now realised that they were mistaken and recognised that Ngo Dinh Diem was a true patriot. After some minutes of this—the President, by the way, just lapped up this unwonted praise from the Communists—the Frenchman went on to convey Ho Chi Minh's proposals. Ho argued that all of Vietnam's troubles were caused by 'the foreigners,' and if 'the foreigners' were thrown out, there were no difficulties which two patriotic Vietnamese leaders could not resolve by themselves. President Diem had only to declare South Vietnam a 'neutral state' and ask the Americans to go, and Ho Chi Minh would call an end to the guerilla war, commence trade between North and South Vietnam, and so on. It was all beautifully contrived, and the Americans were given no hint of what was going on. Of course General de Gaulle set the stage nicely in Paris by his public offer to use French good offices to secure the reunification of Vietnam....

"Well, Lalouette next introduced Manelli, the head of the Polish element in the International Control Commission, to the Presidential palace to meet Ngo Dinh Nhu. Manelli put detailed proposals from North Vietnam to Nhu. None of these differed from those previously put to the President, but they were fuller and more precise....

"There's no possibility of any mistake or misunderstanding about this. I heard the full story from President Diem and Nhu themselves. They admit it freely. Of course I don't know exactly what the French hope to get out of it. Certainly they'd be delighted to see the Americans thrown out, leaving France with the strongest foreign influence in Vietnam. But I imagine the Communists have offered to pay them something as well for the use of their good offices. No doubt they have been given guarantees to cover French investments in South Vietnam when the Communists take over, and nothing could stop them from taking over if the American military withdrew now. The French never learn from past mistakes. After losing a war in Vietnam, they went straight back and started waging a similar war in Algeria. After failing to save any but the least important French interests in North Vietnam following the Communist take-over, they're now hoping to save French interests in South Vietnam when the self-same Communists take over. It's almost beyond belief!...

"Anyway, I'm sure Lalouette and Ho Chi Minh are not going to enjoy reading the details of their scheme in the press, and the story may help the people back in the States to understand what is really going on out here. Of course the French will try to deny it officially. Or will put the blame on Lalouette and say it was all a big mistake. They're never at their most convincing when they adopt that attitude. Many qualities are associated with the French in the public mind—but innocence is not one of them...."

P. J. Honey

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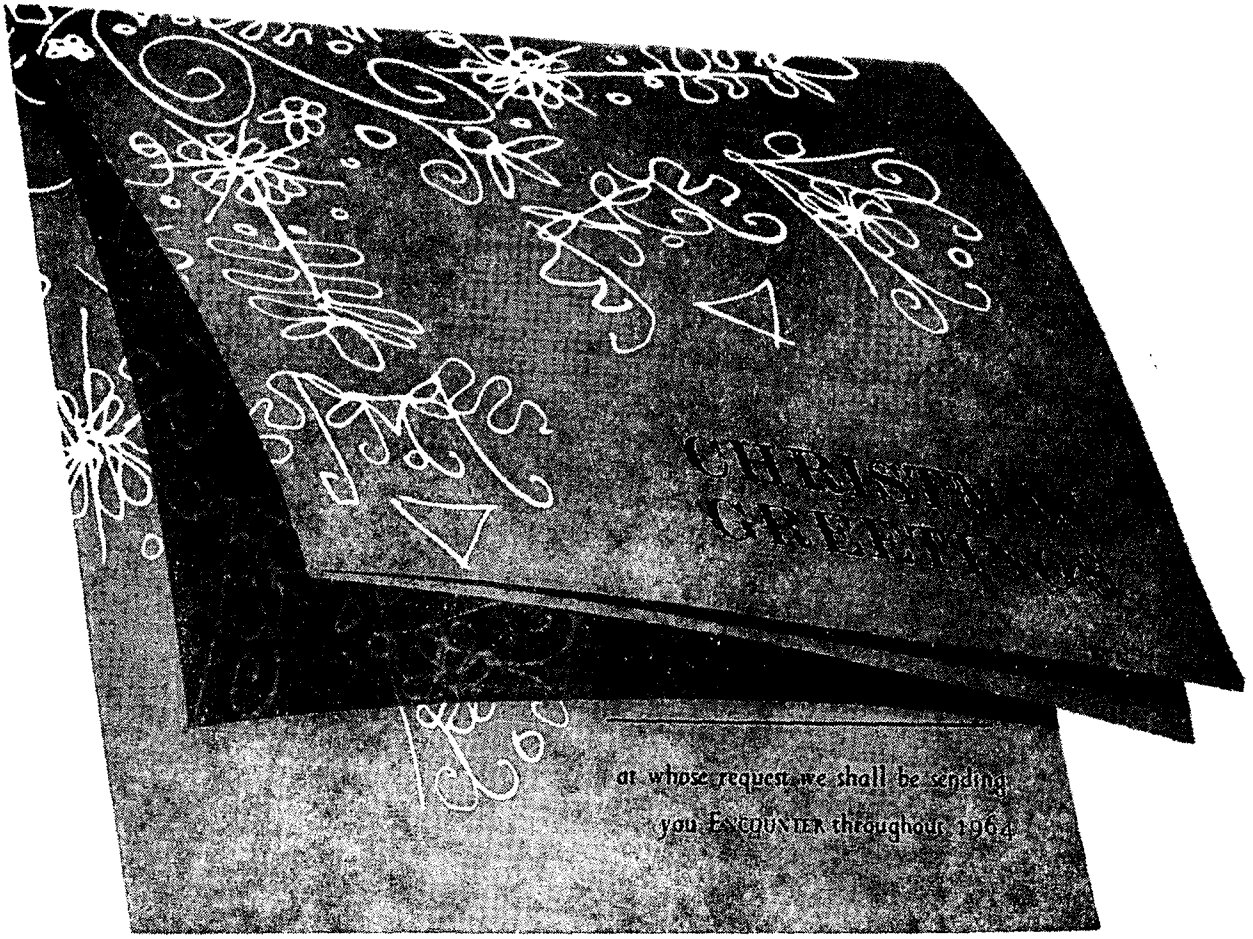

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Trotsky in Exile

By Alasdair MacIntyre

TROTSKY learning to fish in the Sea of Marmora from an illiterate Greek boy; Trotsky on a ski trip in the Norwegian Arctic; Trotsky feeding the rabbits among the cacti at Coyoacan: images such as these all contribute to the violent sense of dislocation which is produced by turning from the first two volumes of Isaac Deutscher's biography to the third.[1] But this dislocation is not of course merely a matter of place. Trotsky's physical remoteness from events in the years 1929–40 is only matched by his apparent political isolation. The creator of the Red Army is reduced to the leader of a scattered following of a few hundred militants; the inspirer of the Soviets is a stateless exile. Exile, of course, is not necessarily impotence. But the question must be faced. Is Trotsky in exile, like Marx in the British Museum, a commentator who is also an actor, or is he, like Napoleon on St. Helena, an outcast from the world of action?

What kind of answer one gives to this question will determine the whole perspective in which one sees Trotsky's last decade. To understand Deutscher's answer fully we shall have to look back to his *Stalin*. Deutscher's own statement in the preface to the 1961 edition of *Stalin* of the unity of his work on Stalin and Trotsky justifies us in so doing.

"In attempting to find an historical parallel to Stalin," wrote Trotsky in 1940, "we have to reject not only Cromwell, Robespierre, Napoleon, and Lenin, but even Mussolini and Hitler." "What appears to be established," wrote Deutscher in his *Stalin* (1949), "is that Stalin belongs to the breed of the great revolutionary despots, to which Cromwell, Robespierre, and Napoleon belonged."

The gap between Deutscher's judgment and Trotsky's is a first clue to Deutscher's standpoint. For Deutscher believes that there is a "broad scheme of revolutionary development" which is "common to all great revolutionaries so far." The first stage is one in which "popular energy, impatience, anger and hope" burst out, and "the party that gives the fullest expression to the popular mood outdoes its rivals, gains the confidence of the masses and rises to power." There follows a second heroic stage of civil war in which revolutionary party and people are so well attuned that the leaders "are willing and even eager to submit their policies to open debate and to accept the popular verdict." This stage is short. Weariness and ruthlessness combine to open a gap between party and people. The party cannot abdicate without sacrificing the basis the revolution has created for social advance and prosperity; but it can no longer listen to, it must indeed in time suppress the voice of the people. At this point the revolutionary party is split between those who see government by the people as the heart of the revolution and therefore cry that the revolution is betrayed and those who justify the new anti-democratic use of power as the only way to serve the ultimate interests of the people by preserving the gains of the revolution. This story is one that Deutscher supposes can be told of any "party of the revolution, whether it be called Independent, Jacobin or Bolshevik," whether it is English, French or Russian. It is within the framework of this story that Stalin and Trotsky are made to appear as playing out necessary roles. Trotsky, the caretaker of revolutionary purity, is necessarily doomed to political isolation in the period of the anti-democratic conservation of revolutionary gains. The significance of the quotation from Machiavelli which stands at the head of Deutscher's first volume is now clear; the prophet must be armed precisely so that he can, when the people no longer believe in the revolution, "make them believe by force."

Theory of Revolution and its component stages

THIS IS THE SETTING for the message that is spelt out in the concluding volume. Trotsky's ideas and methods, so Deutscher argues, be-

[1] *The Prophet Outcast* (Oxford University Press, 45s.).

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longed to classical Marxism; but the 'thirties were an epoch hostile both to revolution and to Marxism. After the Second World War revolution resumed its course—but not as Marxism had predicted. It was revolution from above, brought to Eastern Europe by a foreign army, to China by a peasant *jacquerie*, which nonetheless inaugurated a socialist revolution. The Soviet bureaucracy—so Deutscher continues—is gradually reforming itself and at some point in this process will be forced to acknowledge Trotsky's greatness. Classical Marxism will then have come into its own. Trotsky is thus honoured by Deutscher on two counts: as the great dissenter whose protest was both necessary and necessarily ineffective; and as the future patron saint of post-Khrushchevite Russia. That this is the frame within which the portrait of Trotsky in his last years is painted entails that Deutscher has written both a biography and a political tract. The weakness of his book arises from the conflict between these two tasks.

The strength of the book lies in the meticulous scholarship: names, dates, places, at this level of fact Deutscher, as always, is a model of industry. Moreover his style is as magisterial as ever. He writes with the restrained passion of the deeply committed writer, whose deepest commitment of all is to objectivity. And yet although objectivity can rescue one from many errors, it cannot either obliterate or conceal the effects of the basic incoherence of Deutscher's perspective. To exhibit this incoherence it is enough to look at how Trotsky himself developed his own positions in the years of exile.

TROTSKY between 1928 and 1940 held at least four positions on the nature of the Russian state. In 1928 he held that political power, though effectively controlled by the bureaucrats, was still in some sense in the hands of the workers, because it was still possible for them to use constitutional means to "regain full power, renovate the bureaucracy and put it under its control by *the road of reform of the party and the Soviets*." (Letter to Borodai). He could write that "the socialist character of industry is determined and secured in a decisive measure by the role of the party, the voluntary internal cohesion of the proletarian vanguard, and conscious discipline of the administrators, trade union functionaries, members of the shop nuclei, etc." (Letter to the Sixth Comintern Congress). What matters is the access to political institutions still available to workers.

By 1933 Trotsky believed that this access was no longer available, but that Russia was still a workers' state. The cruel repression exercised by the bureaucracy is not incompatible with their maintaining the core of revolutionary gains so long as the means of production remain nationalised; but they have been able by reason of the backwardness of Russia to produce a tyranny which endangers the revolution. Trotsky by now believed that inside and outside Russia the Left Opposition had to constitute new political parties, genuinely revolutionary in the rest of the world, genuinely reformist in Russia. Reformist, because the bureaucracy was not as yet a new ruling class in the classical Marxist sense, and the prospect of a political strategy in which the bureaucrats could be expropriated without force in the long run was not as yet unrealistic. By the time *The Revolution Betrayed* was written in 1935 the perspective had changed yet again. Certainly Russia is still a workers' state, even although so gravely degenerated. But the bureaucracy can only be overthrown by a political revolution. The portrait of deadening, tyrannical oppression which is painted in *The Revolution Betrayed* could not be bettered. Why then did Trotsky continue to insist that bureaucracy was only a caste, not a class, and why did he make the preservation of nationalised property the criterion of socialism? The answer is that he up to this point always envisaged the bureaucracy's final goal as being the restoration of private capitalism. He supposed that socialism and private capitalism exhausted the political alternatives—wrongly. For in the period immediately before his death Trotsky did come round to envisage, even if only as a theoretical possibility, a new kind of exploitation—the collective class rule of the bureaucracy. This he did not believe to have yet occurred. But his analysis of Soviet totalitarianism became even more radical.

> *L'état c'est moi* is almost a liberal formula by comparison with the actualities of Stalin's totalitarian régime. Louis XIV identified himself with both the state and the Church—but only during the epoch of temporal power. The totalitarian state goes far beyond Caesaro-Papism... Stalin can justly say, unlike *le Roi Soleil*, *"la société c'est moi."*

Although Trotsky continued to defend the view that in some sense the Soviet Union was a workers' state, he had committed himself to predictions about the results of the Second World War, the outcome of which would for him settle the matter. If his view were correct, the Soviet bureaucracy after a victorious war would be overthrown as a result of proletarian revolution in the advanced countries of the West. If the view of those Trotskyists who held that a kind of bureaucratic state capitalism existed in Russia were correct, they would be

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vindicated by the failure to occur of such a revolution and such an overthrow. It was with this question still before him that Trotsky died.

TO READ TROTSKY'S successive evaluations of the Russian state against the background of what was done to his followers, his family and himself is to understand that theory too can have a dramatic role. For it was not merely Trotsky's person but his theoretical powers that Stalin wished to condemn to death. Stalinism required the pulverisation of every independent political voice in Russia and in the international Communist movement; hence not only the Moscow trials, but the extended passion of the Trotskyists in the Siberian camps, where those who had never surrendered, but who had continued to organise strikes, protests and political propaganda among their fellow prisoners, were in 1938 marched out in groups and shot. Leon Sedov, Trotsky's elder son, died mysteriously in Paris with the G.P.U. not far from his bedside; Sergei, who had reacted against both his father and his father's politics, and who worked quietly as a private citizen in Moscow, died at the hands of the G.P.U.; Zina, one of his daughters—the other was already dead—had committed suicide under intense nervous strain in Berlin some years before. Rudolf Klement, the Secretary of the Fourth International, was in 1938 murdered, mutilated and dropped in the Seine. If Trotsky was not utterly crushed, it was only because he was upheld by his wife Natalya and by the conviction that no one but he could carry through his task and that the importance of his work was only to be measured by the venom he aroused in Stalin.

Among the many characters with walking-on parts in this drama some are familiar. Those who last year protested at the Home Secretary's inhumanity to that "persecuted progressive," Dr. Soblen, will meet him again in Deutscher's pages as the G.P.U. agent Roman Well. Mr. Kingsley Martin turns up at Coyoacan, but the meeting is not altogether pleasant, because Mr. Martin wishes to defend the honour of his friend Mr. D. N. Pritt over his defence of the Moscow trials. M. Léon Blum appears suppressing protests against the trials and purges. Theodore Dreiser, Romain Rolland, and Louis Fischer play familiar roles as Stalinist apologists. If anyone says that at that time any of them could not have known better, that the threat of Fascism and the effectiveness of Stalin's propaganda exculpate these men, the answer is that many who were far from Trotsky's Marxism did know better. The aged John Dewey, chairman of the committee that vindicated Trotsky against Stalin's accusations,

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comes out of the whole affair with immense honour. So does Charles Beard, the veteran American historian. And they were not alone.

BUT THE DIMENSIONS of Trotsky's tragedy and the way in which reactions to it became a touchstone of honour and dishonour only make the re-evaluation of his views the more crucial. An essential piece of evidence is Trotsky's single most brilliant piece of political comment, the pamphleteering on Germany from 1930–33. The diagnosis of Nazism as "the extremism of the centre" which Professor S. M. Lipset advanced in *Political Man* is already made by Trotsky. His castigations of the Comintern over its attitude to the social democrats, to the government of Brüning and to Hitler himself all bore fruit in verified predictions. At the centre of his analysis the stress is on the importance of the presence or absence of a politically awakened working-class. (Trotsky's advice about the mobilisation of the workers was never taken by the Comintern; but a parody of his point was taken, perhaps unwittingly, by Debré and de Gaulle when the *paras* threatened. Was there by the remotest of chances and historical ironies a link in Malraux?) This remains at the core of all Trotsky's analyses. For the Trotsky of the 'thirties, as for Marx, socialism can be made only by the workers and not for them.

It is in part because of this that Trotsky, had he lived, would have had to treat his predictions about the aftermath of the Second World War as falsified. He could not but have concluded from his own premises that Russia was in no sense a workers' state, but rather a grave of socialism. The liberalisation of Khrushchev would have appeared to him as parallel to the liberalisation which has developed in other capitalisms once primitive accumulation has been accomplished. He could never have accepted Deutscher's analysis, which has only one thing in common with his own: the use of nationalised property as a criterion for socialism. Trotsky never believed in the possibility of the bureaucracy's self-reformation. In *The Revolution Betrayed* Trotsky wrote of the bureaucracy that

> To the extent that, for the benefit of an upper stratum, it carries to more and more extreme expression bourgeois norms of distribution, it is preparing a capitalist restoration. This contrast between forms of property and norms of distribution cannot grow indefinitely. Either the bourgeois norms must in one form or another spread to the means of production, or the norms of distribution must be brought into correspondence with the socialist property system.

According to Deutscher it is this latter course that Stalin's successors have adopted. In what way the norms of distribution differ from bourgeois norms he never explains (in Deutscher's view Britain also has surely abandoned bourgeois norms of distribution). But what is most interesting is that both Alfred Rosmer, Trotsky's most able and trusted companion, and Natalya Trotsky herself drew the opposite conclusion. It was for this reason that Natalya Trotsky explained her break with the stunted and ingrown politics of the self-styled Trotskyists by writing "If this trend continues, he [Trotsky] said, the revolution will be at an end and the restoration of capitalism will be achieved. That, unfortunately, is what has happened even if in new and unexpected forms." (Letter to the Political Committee of the Socialist Workers' Party, 1951.) Almost her last political act was a letter in *Azione Communista* in November, 1961, denouncing the idea that Mao Tse Tung was in any sense Trotsky's heir, and asserting that Russia and China were as far from socialism as Franco's Spain.

ONE HAS, THEREFORE, to choose. Either one can see Leon Trotsky in Natalya's perspective or in Deutscher's, but not in both. There seems little doubt which Trotsky would have chosen. The distressing thing to him about Deutscher's biography would have been that it makes him so acceptable to those against whom he struggled for his entire life. What is more, Deutscher's adroitness will make his conclusions equally palatable on both sides of the Curtain. The news that socialism is Khrushchevite liberalisation plus nationalised property will not come amiss in Moscow. Both Trotsky and classical Marxism, it turns out, have to be amended to fit in with Russian reality. Trotsky's Marxist predictions were wrong, but Marxism is somehow vindicated nonetheless and so is Trotsky. I do not understand how. In the West too the news that the Khrushchevite régime is the necessary outcome of the Russian revolution will be welcome. For this can be thrown back at all believers in the possibility of socialism in the West. It is admirably suited for apologists of the *status quo*. Trotsky, the inevitable protester against the inevitable course of socialist history, can be safely received by both sides as a dead martyr, with a sigh of relief that they have not the living revolutionary to deal with.

What is most curious about Deutscher's anxiety to approve of the present developments in Russia *and* of Trotsky *and* of the letter of classical Marxism, is that Trotsky's own attitude to Marxism was far less hagiographical. Throughout his life Trotsky was prepared to reformulate Marxism. The theory of permanent revolution bears striking witness to this. In the 'thirties we see him trying to use the Marxist

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theory of classical capitalism to understand entirely new situations. In this situation it may have been that Marxism proved a totally inadequate scheme (the orthodox sociological response) or it may have been that it provided a necessary starting point for a new, more complex, but still Marxist schematism. The attempts to characterise the Russian bureaucracy pose just this question; the attempt to characterise post-War Western capitalism would have posed it even more harshly. But whatever answers Trotsky might have given, he could never have been an accomplice to Deutscher's worship of the accomplished fact. Deutscher himself sees clearly in his discussion of Trotsky's *History of the Russian Revolution* that Trotsky was no believer in Deutscherian necessity.

The Shakespearean richness of character which is among the chief glories of the *History* brings out the important difference between those actors who are essentially representatives of a social group or class and who are therefore replaceable and those actors who are more than this, who cannot be so replaced. Miliukov, the Russian liberal, is essentially a mirror for the Russian bourgeoisie—"grey, self-interested, cowardly." Lenin, by contrast, was both an expression of his party and more than this. Had he been absent, the revolution's chances, so Trotsky argued, would have been very different. Deutscher devotes several pages to trying to refute Trotsky's conclusion on this point and we can see why this is necessary for his whole argument. If from time to time history presents us with real alternatives where my actions can make all the difference, then I am not just part of an inevitable historical progress. Deutscher invokes Plekhanov's determinism on his side and the reminiscence of Plekhanov is suggestive. Deutscher's life of Trotsky, with all its scholarship, its brilliance of style, its perversity about socialism, its service of the established fact, and its determinism, is just the biography that we can imagine a Plekhanov of the nineteen-sixties writing. But Trotsky himself evades all the categories of a Plekhanovite Marxism; his image refuses to be accommodated.

The truth of this is reflected in the way that his name continues to haunt all established powers. So-called Trotskyism has been among the most trivial of movements. It transformed into abstract dogma what Trotsky thought in concrete terms at one moment in his life and canonised this. It is inexplicable in purely political dimensions, but the history of the more eccentric religious sects provides revealing parallels. The genuine Trotskyism of Rosmer and Natalya must have at most a few

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hundred adherents in the entire world. Yet Trotsky's is the name which is continually invoked, at one level by employers who fear rank-and-file industrial agitation, and at another by those super-employers, the Russian and Chinese states, in their polemics against each other. If they were to read Deutscher and to accept his conclusions, they would wonder what the spectre could have been which haunted them. But I doubt if it is possible to lay Trotsky's ghost so easily.

Three Women

The Group. By MARY MCCARTHY. *Weidenfeld & Nicolson*, 18s. Harcourt, Brace, New York.

The Girls of Slender Means. By MURIEL SPARK. *Macmillan*, 17s. 6d. Alfred Knopf. New York.

The Unicorn. By IRIS MURDOCH. *Chatto & Windus*, 21s. Viking Press, New York.

THERE ARE SEVERAL slide-rule methods of assessing new books. One of my Cambridge instructors used to put them on the scales: "14lb. of American scholarship," he would groan. Alice looked for pictures and conversations. The people who had to decide which was Bible and which Apocrypha simply put the books on a table and waited to see which had been divinely flung to the floor by morning. My spot test is to imagine new books by established authors coming in as unsolicited first manuscripts. And speaking with the bitter confidence of an ex-publisher's reader I'd say that the new Spark and the new McCarthy would have had the publishers sending out for champagne after the first chapter; and that the new Iris Murdoch would probably never have got published at all.

All three of these books concern a group of people rather than a single individual. Mary McCarthy's *The Group* follows eight Vassar graduates through the seven years preceding the War. Muriel Spark's *The Girls of Slender Means* takes the girls of a Kensington hostel through the summer between VE and VJ day; and Iris Murdoch's *The Unicorn* concerns a captive creature in a castle and her various gaolers, lovers, heirs and assigns. The sad fact of the matter is that *The Unicorn* demonstrates the defects of just about every good quality shown by the other two—sad, because *Under the Net*, her first novel, would easily have ranked with either. Wit? A quality equivalent to a sense of proportion in a woman novelist, it is never absent from the Spark and the McCarthy, never present in the Murdoch. A feeling for people in the round, who seem actually to be doing things that are worth worrying about? The same. A sense of time and place, of history? It is there in the Spark, almost the most important thing in the McCarthy; but *The Unicorn* exists in a void, timeless and out of this world.

IT HAS BEEN said that the twentieth century practically invented the historical sense, that we are the first people who do not unself-consciously slap our cornices and gables on to earlier buildings or dress the Crucifixion in our own clothes without knowing what we are doing; and both the Spark and the McCarthy demonstrate what an enormous amount this historical sense can add to a book that is still basically about people and their emotions. It is Mary McCarthy's tremendous achievement that she gets across a way of thinking that is dated, in the sense of belonging to a particular time, without at any point resorting to "period flavour;" never mentioned directly, there comes off the pages that extraordinary sense of hope, of belief in progress that you get from real writings of the period; and the book is basically about the clash between that point of view and the ordinary processes of living. The embarrassed misery of Priss Hartshorn, the girl whose doctrinaire husband makes her breast-feed when the Time Spirit is all for the bottle (and whose child revenges himself for the inhuman correctness of his upbringing by soiling his pants in public places), and the comparable tale of Polly Andrews and her husband, who shock their friends rigid by deciding to have her dotty old father *actually living* with them, are exercises in historical irony of a high order. And Norine Schmittlapp is a non-coper to rank with Micawber and Pnin: the girl who always manages to make a mess of her life not in spite of but with the aid of the latest theory: as a Freudian Communist, she is hopeless with the tins of evaporated milk and her impotent husband (not to mention the potent husbands of other people); switched later to anthropology, the denial of brains and the cult of the Feminine Role, she tries to work it all out in a rich Jewish matriarchy and gets on no better. One of the things that stops Mary McCarthy ever typing people in terms of their ideology is her realisation that people's theories, like people's hats, may suit them or may not: Norine is a girl who looks ghastly in them all.

This book is rich in irony, beautifully written and of such a depth that one wants to start re-reading it almost as soon as one finishes it. But for all that it is not a perfect book, nor-

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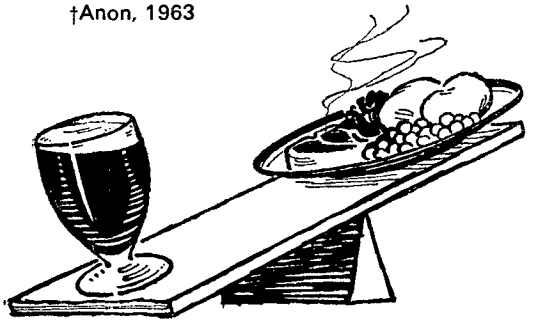
*Barham, Ingoldsby Legends, 1840

†Anon, 1963



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even, though I believe she thinks so, Mary McCarthy's best. The trouble is that the different weight given to the different women does not parallel their impact. Priss, Polly, and Norine come across in the space allotted to them, and so does Kay, the tragic figure whose wedding begins and whose funeral ends the book. Kay is the shooting star, the girl whose far-out individuality is her passport to leadership of the rather conventional group; in fact she wants conventional success more than any of them and sticks doggedly to the ex-future genius she has married because to leave him would be to admit the biggest failure of all. Harald, the said failed genius, is also a superb portrait of exactly the sort of phoney who finds intelligent women his natural prey: no-one, but no-one, equals Mary McCarthy when it comes to getting the knife into hateful males. And Lakey, the brainiest, though she is absent for most of the book and only reappears at the end as a Lesbian (her abnormality the only weapon in the group capable of settling the hash of the equally abnormal Harald), is a clear, hard-cut portrait in miniature. But the other figures never really come out of the mist: we have no clear idea of Helena, the sexless clever one, or of Pokey Prothero, the rich girl who clearly bores Mary McCarthy so much that she can only describe her through the eyes of her English butler. And there is too much space given to Dottie Renfrew, whose problems (including the necessity of brazening her way into a birth control clinic) arise from being both highly sexed and highly conventional. It needs the detail: one of Mary McCarthy's best fields is the absurdity of sex (remember the woman in *A Charmed Life* getting seduced *by mistake*, simply by going without break from its being too early to say "No" to its being too late). But it should not take so many words. Again Libby MacAusland, a booksy girl who is consigned to what is clearly the serious novelist's lowest den of hell, a literary agency, remains unfinished: in spite of her talents for self-deception and self-abuse we feel her vices are the justification, not the cause, of the author's dislike of her. It would have been a better constructed book, I think, if these had either been expanded to make them more convincing or cut down to shorter background sketches: the four central portraits could easily carry the book on their own.

THE GIRLS of slender means are as much creatures of their time as the Vassar graduates —a time when nylons were currency, boy friends were rated by military rank, food was foul and gaiety among the rubble was the order of the day. The girls and their friends are some of the most skilful creations—and the funniest —that Mrs. Spark has achieved: she lacerates with precise unkindness the dodges that Jane the fat girl uses to permit herself chocolate ("I do brain work, you see"), or the sprightly unfairness of the older woman who reproaches all who cross her just when "one is growing in grace—I would go so far as to say when one *has* grown in grace." She is marvellous on those two recurrent figures of the times, the mittel-European literary wild man ("Nicholas is a friend of mine, but I regret to say he's a non-contributive thinker, by the way") and the puritanical American officer who uses phrases like "giving a discussion" and over whose lechery there ever looms, like the Statue of Liberty, the brooding image of his wife. Mrs. Spark is superb at speech: there is a deb, for instance, who only speaks about eight sentences, but since three of them are "I'm desperately well, thanks, how are you?" "Oh, hell, I'm black with soot, I'm absolutely filthington." and finally "Filthy luck. I'm preggers. Come to the wedding" one feels one hardly needs more.

If this book, shrewd, economical and funny as it is, misses being absolutely top-notch Spark it is, I think, because she has caught the gaiety of the times but missed something equally important: their moral earnestness. She makes a great point of everybody being poor, but does not mention that it was almost immoral, in a world where hoarding was a worse crime than bedding, to be anything else. The hostel I was inhabiting at about that time was less smart than hers (on the wrong side of the *wrong* park), but I still think that the feeling that put in Stafford Cripps, boiled over into large primary-coloured bubbles at the Festival of Britain and thought the New Look unpatriotic was at its strongest that summer. It is a pity it is missing; because it could have provided, even by unspoken contrast, a sort of poignancy and depth the book somehow lacks. You cannot imagine the girls living beyond that summer, and one does not have the full sense of historical perspective that makes one see Mary McCarthy's leftists, for example, in the light of what they will be in for later from the other McCarthy. Muriel Spark's glittering surface poison always needs one deep incision to make it run in the veins: in *The Bachelors* it was Patrick's evil plotting, in *Memento Mori* it was the guilt between Charlotte and Humphrey, the sacrifice of Jean Taylor. This time it is obviously meant to be provided by Nicholas, the news of whose death, flashing in later years from girl to girl, is the party line on which the flashbacks are hung; but he remains

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unreal, his death not explanatory but absurd: Mrs. Spark has the wit, the Catholicism and the unkindness of Evelyn Waugh, but she has not yet mastered his skill at heartbreaking jungle deaths.

TO SAY THAT AFTER these two *The Unicorn* strikes one as totally unreal still leaves one with a choice of weapons with which to bludgeon it. There is, for a start, the reality that is largely a question of focus: the convention that described the cut of a man's beard but never the hairs on his razor, the proposal in the conservatory but never the heaving bedsprings, now strikes us as unreal: more detail is needed to be convincing. But the kind of frenetic observation of *every* detail that comes on when you have a temperature or a drink taken can be equally unreal, since this sort of clarity, to whom all pores are open, all desires known, and every damp cigarette-butt of immense significance, is also not how most of us see things most of the time. Muriel Spark may miss the long view but her close range is faultless; Mary McCarthy seems to me to have exactly the right zoom lens for going from the one to other (even the obsessive detail of poor Dottie's contraception is dead right, since that it is exactly the sort of subject where the details *do* claim the attention). But Iris Murdoch focuses firmly above all such details. In *Under the Net* her people watched taxi-meters, got drunk, lost things, misunderstood each other, worried about money and shaving and shoes; but in *The Unicorn* you never really believe even in the whisky they constantly drink (if only because it has no effect on them and they never run out of it); and the cars in which the unicorn's escape is attempted and foiled seem as inappropriate as the Coca Cola ad. so soon to be projected on the moon. Indeed, Miss Murdoch not only refuses to construct details that might help us believe that her people actually breathe and live: she deliberately ignores those that lie to hand. For example, we finally deduce, from the nearness of the bog, the ease with which the police are fixed, and the unlikely prevalence of servants, that the place must be Ireland: but why on earth does she not say so in the first place? One would have thought if one was trying to add substance to something spooky and sinister there could be nothing more appropriate than the ghosts and passion and tragedy of Irish history; but no, she throws away an Egdon Heath for the sake of a plaster film-set.

There is also the sort of reality that is simply a synonym for credibility: can one believe people

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might exist and behave like this? Here again, nothing is done to relieve the essential unlikelihood of the story and the people in it. A beautiful woman, Hannah, is undergoing semi-voluntary penance for having betrayed a vile husband and then tried to kill him: her husband's gaolers encircle her, devoted but accusing: Violet Evercreech, a dotty old Lesbian put in only to provide local off-colour, plus her young corrupted brother; Marian, a clean young thing from the outside world who tries unsuccessfully to rescue Hannah; Scottow the beast, the husband's lover and creature, who finally by a ruse enslaves Hannah to himself and is shot by her. Across the valley there is a further houseful, presumably meant to represent, in contrast, the real world: but Alice is the only credible one among them: there is also her brother, Hannah's original lover; the father, a scholar, who broods upon Hannah without ever having set eyes on her and is finally left all her money (don't ask me why); and Effingham, a visiting Civil Servant, who is Hannah's buttress *en titre* and is allegedly in love with her.

I say allegedly, because one of the more maddening qualities this book shares with *A Severed Head* is the capacity for everybody to be "realising" that they really love everybody else—indeed, what makes Alice the most believable character in the book is that she confines herself to two, the one she loves and the one she desires. The people love not just across sexual boundaries but without any apparent awareness of their existence—and I suppose one piece of Rossetti-like pasteboard is, when you come down to it, just about interchangeable with any other. But one feels that one might be more convinced, at least temporarily, by Miss Murdoch's revelations if she could only make up her mind which have some validity and which are illusions—Hannah changing her mind about her role as sufferer, Effingham having celestial visions one minute and forgetting them the next: we never know which we are supposed to believe. Even the final deaths leave us in the dark—they merely come as a welcome relief to end a situation that otherwise seemed likely to circle in perpetual motion for ever.

There is, of course, another sort of reality, the sort you can get in poetry or religion, which can make a Nativity valid although the oxen are plainly stuffed and the baby ten months old. But pleading this is like pleading justification in a libel action; the penalties of failure are much, much worse. And it seems to me that on this symbolic level Miss Murdoch fails dismally, because she has forgotten what a symbol is *for*—which is to make something clear that would otherwise not be. There is more symbolism in the last paragraph of *A Charmed Life*, where Martha's death symbolises the whole failure of the intellectuals to live life on special terms, or even in Thurber's Unicorn at the bottom of the garden, than in the whole of *The Unicorn*. If you put a character into a symbolic robe instead of a simple little button-through, it must reveal something about the character; it cannot be a garment chosen equally at random from a celestial wardrobe. And these symbols fail in their own terms because they reveal no higher reality, make no final point: they are less than human, not more. She thinks she is creating archetypes when she is only producing arch types.

I RECENTLY met a man who had met Iris Murdoch's husband at a party two years ago; and on the strength of it reckoned that Hannah was God, or at least a God-figure to all the other characters. This seems as good an explanation as any for the sub-plot (subterranean, not subsidiary); but to write a book which only makes sense if you happen to meet a man who has met the husband of the author is simply not on.

What, then, is to be done with this maddening woman, in whose talent I still stubbornly insist on believing? I think what she badly needs is a change of medium—and quick, before she succumbs to the prevailing malaise and bores us all into the ground with a Trilogy. If she is going to be a fantastist with no feet on the ground and no sense of humour, it seems to me that she must tackle the one field where fantasy has a discipline: I think (quite seriously) that she should try science fiction. It is, at the moment, the one form which absolutely insists that something happen, that a story has some shape, and that something is opposed to something else, if it is only the bug-eyed blondes against the bubble-breasted monsters. All it lacks so far is fine writing—Ray Bradbury and the author of *Tyger, Tyger* have come nearest to it, but there is still a huge gap at the top. She simply cannot go on doing this celestial knitting—not in a world where the crisp brilliance of Muriel Spark and the wit and insight of Mary McCarthy are there to put her to shame.

Katharine Whitehorn

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Pieter Geyl

Encounters in History. By PIETER GEYL. *Collins*, 35s. Meridian Books, New York.

PROFESSOR GEYL has a great reputation as a destroyer of historical faiths. It is therefore surprising that this book should be likely to strengthen faith in others. Every essay is a monument to that orthodoxy which G. M. Young declared the only possible one left to an educated man—"faith in the argument itself." It is, in Geyl's famous definition of history, an argument without end; but not by any means without value. It will produce no certain universal truths, but some probable local ones; and it will—if followed reasonably—dispose of falsehoods which might otherwise radically corrupt thought and action. Geyl occupies a middle position between historicists and specialists, triumphantly refuting the claims of either faction to line him up with the other: at its best, his work achieves breadth without shallowness, judgment without bias and relativism without chaos. He is the last—or, less pessimistically, the latest—of the great liberal historians. If he has discarded the extreme optimism, the party spirit, the reckless moral anachronisms which disfigured Motley or Macaulay, he has not thrown out with the bathwater their belief that the conclusions and understanding of historians both stem from and contribute to the morality of their own time. One might legitimately draw an analogy from the autobiographical lecture in this book, where he describes his political activity:

> I did join the SDAP (Socialist Party) immediately after the war, just before it changed its name to Labour Party in order to mark the definite break with Marxist doctrinairism. Let me just add that the explanation that I used to give my friends, in all sincerity, was that I looked upon the Socialist Party as the last refuge for a liberal. For of course what I really am is a liberal. But our present-day Liberal Party, which professes to continue the traditions of Thorbecke, strikes me as a typically Conservative Party.

Legitimately, because the interaction of history and politics has been a theme of his life and work. His great discovery in Netherlands history—the strategically determined boundary of Spanish reconquest in the 17th century, previously attributed to insuperable differences of character between Northern and Southern provinces—marched so neatly with his work for the Great Netherlands party that it almost lost him the Chair of History at Utrecht in 1935. *Napoleon, For and Against*, perhaps his best-known production in England, is a useful and

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exciting book about Napoleon, but an indispensable one about the changing intellectual climate of France from the Empire to the present. (An essay in this volume on "French Historians and the Revolution" is an interesting shorter parallel to it.) In disentangling true from false or fair from specious in historians' use of history, Geyl has never—as a mere positivist might have done—written off all but factual studies as an unscientific waste. "The facts are there to be used;" or, as he puts it here, "History must reveal to us a meaning or we are not worth our salt." The man whose morality blinkers him from the truth is as bad as, but no worse than, the man in whom truth provokes no moral reaction. A man without such reactions to history would be, in Geyl's eyes, like a man without moral reactions to life, a freak of both nature and civilisation. "History must claim the whole of life for its province:" those who separate the two will be bad historians, bad politicians, or plain bad men.

On the vexed question of the validity of these reactions (how can a liberal preaching relativism, or a historian conscious of the limitations of moral outlook inseparable from some periods of history, hand out ethical comments with any conviction?). Geyl's stand seems an eminently sensible one. He does not demand (no-one outside the fantasies of the "objectivists" does) the right to pass sentence on Hitler or on Napoleon with the arrogant assurance of hindsight or the sweeping certainty of enlightenment: that sort of judgment would be as useless on historical characters as on contemporaries. The truth (again as in judgments on contemporaries) rests on a paradox: if we are reasonably self-aware we must know that many of our moral standards have not been freely chosen, and yet we continue to hold them. Whether it is deduced from an adult principle or attributed to a childhood accident, we believe what we believe; and thus we may find ourselves simultaneously asserting something, and admitting that we cannot provide an *a priori* general justification for it. Toynbee's claim to have liberated himself from his heritage gives rise—after a skirmish over the limits of "detachment" necessary or desirable—to this passage:

> The thought that one can divest oneself from all one's earthly limitations, that one has attained to an "intellectual independence" which can do without any ties with natural group connections or tradition, that one knows better than all preceding generations—this is a prideful thought and at times, one can't help feeling, just a little ridiculous.

It says a great deal for Geyl's devotion to the subject that he will go on defending this unspectacular truth against all comers, however ingeniously difficult—or childishly easy—to refute their views may be. Having once established his position, Geyl might well have turned his back on theory and concentrated merely on that well-justified traditional practice which he commends. But he has not: this volume is a witness to how far he is still ready to challenge Marxists, or Toynbee, or Butterfield, or Barraclough on the nature and purpose of historical studies; or to argue with Huizinga, from historical premises and with historiographical evidence, on the way the world is going; or to turn his attention to the idea of European Unity, and the merits or demerits of its present political state. He shares with the system-builders he clobbers a taste for wide-ranging discussions; but his conclusions are the conventional liberal "inconclusive" ones, pared of excess and bolstered by a twentieth-century scepticism.

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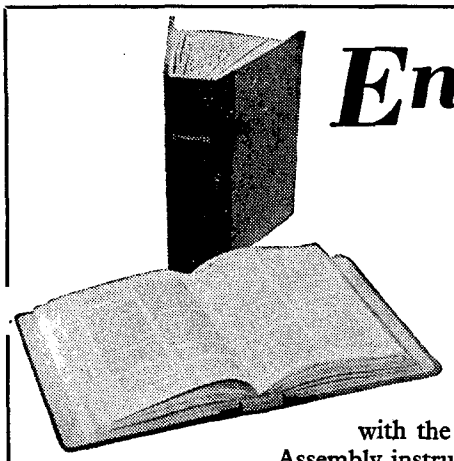

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work of a humanist tradition. Geyl is imbued with such a tradition: the width of these essays, as well as their more passionate outbursts against Communism, confirms this. It is characteristic that the first hundred pages should be devoted to a study of Shakespeare's use of history (and characteristic, too, that he should find Shakespeare's polymorphous and ambiguous richness more dramatic *and* more historical than the massive syllogisms of Racine). Appeals to abandon "Eurocentric" history are dismissed, since we must study not merely what will come to be important, but what we are and were, the culture in which we can find our way around. An archæologist reconstructing a vanished civilisation, or an Englishman sweating out imperialism by looking for the records of pre-colonial Africa—these are hardly historians in Geyl's sense of the term. His subtle brand of relativism returns to take charge of this issue: other civilisations may indeed contain illuminations equal or superior to our own, but we are stuck with what we know and our duty is to cultivate it. Professor Geyl is not going to despair of Europe, any more than he will despair of history; the argument has no end, but progress is made. In the world of historians, such common-sense is not as common as it should be. This book makes reassuring as well as intellectually satisfying reading.

Francis Hope

Ott

Ottoline: The Early Memoirs of Lady Ottoline Morrell. Edited by Robert Gathorne-Hardy. *Faber*, 45s.

> After all, there's only one Ottoline. And she has moved one's imagination. It doesn't matter what sort of vision comes out of a man's imagination, his vision of Ottoline. Any more than a photograph of me is me, or even like me. The so-called portraits of Ottoline can't possibly be Ottoline—no one knows that better than an artist. But Ottoline has moved men's imagination, deeply, and that's perhaps the most a woman can do.

Thus D. H. Lawrence, writing in 1928, in a mood of unusual serenity, to his one-time patroness and the dedicatee (though not the subject) of his book of poems *Amores*. Lawrence was combining a graceful compliment with what looks like an oblique defence of his portrayal of Ottoline as Hermione Roddice in *Women in Love*, a portrayal which had given Ottoline such offence that she and Lawrence were estranged for several years. In these remarks Lawrence defined with some accuracy the role of Lady Ottoline Morrell in 20th-century letters; in addition to her ambiguous good works as patroness and hostess, her extravagant, larger-than-life personality provoked writers in the way that a striking face will attract portrait painters.

Lawrence's Hermione was "a tall, slow, reluctant woman," bizarrely clad in feathers and velvet; "her long, pale face, that she carried lifted up, somewhat in the Rossetti fashion, seemed almost drugged, as if a strange mass of thoughts coiled in the darkness within her, and she was never allowed to escape." Aldous Huxley, putting Ottoline into *Crome Yellow* as Mrs. Wimbush, has left a comparable though more superficial figure:

> She had a large, square, middle-aged face, with a massive projecting nose and little greenish eyes, the whole surmounted by a lofty and elaborate coiffure of a curiously improbable shade of orange.... To-day she was wearing a purple silk dress with a high collar and a row of pearls. The costume, so richly dowagerish, so suggestive of the Royal Family, made her look more than ever like something on the Halls.

Virginia Woolf, who enjoyed Ottoline's friendship but wrote very bitchily about her behind her back, remarked in a letter to Lytton Strachey that she had been to a party where the other guests had fled to a bedroom, leaving Ottoline "got up to look precisely like the Spanish Armada in full sail, in possession of the drawing-room." Siegfried Sassoon, on his first visit to Garsington Manor in 1916, was startled to find his hostess descending a ladder backwards from an upstairs studio, wearing voluminous pink Turkish trousers—these garments being the first thing he saw of her.

William Plomer, in a sympathetic account, has recalled how she "would ask the most personal, direct questions, not in a hectoring way, but without the slightest compunction, and with the manner of a feudal grandee who had a right to be told what she wanted to know." David Garnett has remarked that "spiritually her best quality was generosity: her worst, meanness and the love of power. The good and evil in her waged frequent warfare." Garnett has added that those whom Ottoline merely *liked* were the recipients of a great deal of sympathy, kindness, and help; but those whom she loved "were lucky if, sooner or later, a tiger's claws did not rend them in pieces."

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In his introduction to these memoirs, Mr. Gathorne-Hardy, a life-long friend of Ottoline's, complains of the inaccuracy of these various accounts and claims that he wishes to present the "true" Ottoline, as opposed to the false and legendary versions preserved by many of her dubiously loyal friends. Mr. Gathorne-Hardy is surely assuming too much; his own picture, more charitable than the others, is still only one more study, necessarily partial and coloured, of an ever-fascinating subject. As Lawrence had sensed, none of the portraits could ever capture the "true" Ottoline—whatever that might be. Among her other qualities, Ottoline presents a striking and insoluble problem in literary epistemology. Why, for instance, is this volume of her memoirs published under the title of *Ottoline*, as though it were a novel, instead of being given to the world as "the memoirs of"? A mythopœic tendency, one suspects, is inescapably at work. Ottoline's own story is consistently absorbing, though without giving one the elusive authentic version: a self-portrait is not necessarily a better likeness than a drawing by a detached observer. Ottoline emerges as the last full-blooded representative of an ancient tradition of aristocratic eccentricity. Born Ottoline Violet Anne Cavendish-Bentinck, and half-sister to the Duke of Portland, she had an unhappy childhood; she particularly minded being under-educated, which she tried to remedy in her twenties by desultory spells of study at St. Andrews and Oxford. Temperamentally a rebel, but repressed by her formidable family, she escaped when, at the age of twenty-nine, she married a Radical M.P., Philip Morrell (a man of unusual resilience, it appears).

Thereafter Ottoline attempted to fulfil herself in an almost desperate round of political and artistic activities (or busybodying, as some of her critics would have said). Though sharply in revolt against her background, and sedulously *outré* in appearance, she retained a fair degree of aristocratic imperiousness, as her protégés tended to find out. Yet for all her busy life, happiness seems to have eluded her. It is this sense of inner disappointment that makes her memoirs moving and not just a record of events and persons. Admittedly, she was good at describing; the narrative parts are far better written than the reflective ones, which collapse embarrassingly into Patience Strong mawkishness. In one sense there was a certain crudity and insensitiveness about Ottoline's personality, doubtless the result of her incurably theatrical attitude to the world. Yet even here, and despite the inability of her language to cope with the experience, one finds moments of painful depth, as when she records the death of an infant son in 1906, or when she reflects on the intensity of her love for and dependence on her husband. It is when she is most vulnerable that Ottoline is most attractive.

Her book contains a wealth of agreeable anecdote: there is a curious charm, for instance, in the account of Lytton Strachey pirouetting round a room in a pair of Ottoline's high-heeled shoes. The book stops short in 1915, when there was a strange and predictably short-lived drawing together of Ottoline, Lawrence, and Bertrand Russell in an attempt to draw up a new utopia. The final pages of the book are something of a formal epiphany, when Ottoline describes a visit to Bolsover Castle in the company of Bertrand Russell—"Bertie"—who silently and sagely sucks his pipe while Ottoline delivers an impassioned address on beauty, tradition, and aristocratic values; finally Bertie makes a coolly sceptical reply. The little scene has rather the air of a piece of Renaissance allegory.

Another volume is promised to conclude the story, and that will presumably cover the war-time years at Garsington, outside Oxford, when the Morrells, both pacifists, entertained a distinguished company of dissentient intellectuals. The whole work should provide the fullest and

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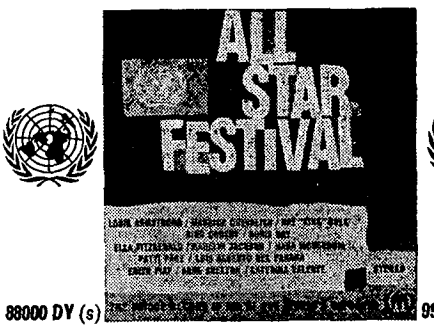

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Bernard Bergonzi

Plain Mysteries

Essays on Literature and Ideas. By JOHN WAIN. *Macmillan*, 30s. St. Martin's Press, New York.

AS CRITIC, John Wain wishes above all to make himself clear. With this object he is engagingly modest, to the point of depreciating his own efforts. In one of these nineteen essays (which make up his second critical book), he offers what he calls an "initial survey of the obvious," and he is quick to define his terms in what he usually insists is their "simplest sense." He agrees with Middleton Murry, as the preface declares, that the purpose of criticism is to render "the quality of the mystery more plain." This homely point of view enables him to give a good sound thump to R. P. Blackmur for making criticism too priestly.

While Mr. Wain proceeds in this fashion without fuss or feathers, the result is not necessarily so clear as he intends. Some inconsistencies of attitude are perhaps inevitable in essays written over six years, so that the first essay takes a sanguine view of the condition of the arts to-day, while a letter to an American, farther in the book but earlier in time, asserts indignantly that the arts are dead. More serious is a fading at the edges that comes from a haste in generalising. The longest essay in the book deals with forms in modern English literature, and sweeps quickly over the literature of the 19th century in England, America, and the continent. Mr. Wain then boldly declares, "The 19th century, on the whole, did not approve of mystery." How much personification any century can bear is an open question, but probably not this much. Even when Mr. Wain qualifies his statement to apply it only to the middle of the 19th century, leaving its last two decades for rebellion, he still seems to invite Baudelaire, Melville, and Poe to bear witness against him.

As he marshals the forms into sub-categories, Mr. Wain's manner is earnest but his discriminations arbitrary. To divide poets into "classical modern" and "beatniks" is hard on the former and gives the latter an importance which, as he himself admits, they do not deserve. To detect ritualistic elements in modern drama would be useful, but while Mr. Wain is emphatic about their presence, he finds more

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influence on Beckett and his school from vaudeville than from rite. Literary history has become one of the most difficult of critical acts, and Mr. Wain, while provocative, often gives an impression of sober recklessness.

In his essays on individual writers Mr. Wain's method is usually to separate two strands within each personality. In Gerard Manley Hopkins he finds a paradoxical blending of isolation and centrality; Byron is caught between lyricism and satire; Pope unites a plain and fanciful turn of mind; Orwell, so vehemently against the future, retains a childlike love of England's past. These formulations are perceptive, but they persuade in quite varying degrees. Sometimes the evidence offered calls the conclusions into question. To prove, for instance, that the 19th century did not interest Hopkins, Mr. Wain quotes a letter to Baillie in which Hopkins writes: "I am brought face to face with the deepest poverty and misery in my district. On this theme I could write much, but it would do no good." This is not a disclaimer of interest, any more than the letter to Bridges in which Hopkins says he agrees generally with the Communists. Mr. Wain's essay on Hopkins is one of his best; his enthusiasm is genuine, and he speaks well about the poems. His praise of such things as Hopkins' language would, however, be more formidable if he would counter the arguments against that language which both Yeats and Eliot have made.

Mr. Wain is hard on Byron for allowing himself to use two personæ, each of which involves suppression of his personality. Byron was "mystified by life," and never overcame this mystification to achieve his own identity. The game of making moral choices for authors who have been dead a hundred years is absorbing, but Mr. Wain is himself halved about this one, so that, after blaming Byron for not expressing his whole personality, he praises him at the end for employing "his full range of gifts."

The trouble is that Mr. Wain's method of isolating opposite strands of the same personality makes for a division which is hard to put right again, and leaves most of his subjects in need of sutures. The last essay, "A Visit to India," epitomises some of his characteristics. He responds eagerly and humorously to India and her discomforts, finds India unintelligible and points out that the West is pretty unintelligible too. There is a kind of "luminous muddle," the "quality of the mystery," as he encounters it, has indeed been made somewhat more plain. Mr. Wain's mind has its sharp probes, but also an area of blur and unconsummated effort.

Richard Ellmann

The New States of Asia

A Political Analysis

MICHAEL BRECHER

These six essays, written during 1961 and 1962, focus attention on the 'new states' of Southern Asia which have become independent since the Second World War. The Appendix gives an edited version of tape-recorded interviews the author had with Nehru in 1956; they are included because of their freshness and relevance to the essays. * 30*s net*

The Republic of South Africa and the High Commission Territories

LORD HAILEY, O.M.

One of the most vital and most complicated issues in Africa today is the future of the High Commission Territories—Basutoland, Bechuanaland, and Swaziland—whose Chiefs resist South African attempts at incorporation. Lord Hailey describes the various rounds of this long-drawn-out conflict; he believes that the Territories should remain under British protection while they progress towards self-government. * 18*s net*

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RICHARD HISCOCKS

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Kant

GABRIELE RABEL

Writing for the general reader, the author gives samples from all Kant's publications, thus reproducing his essential thoughts in easily readable language. There are sixty-three items in all, including some short papers which seem never to have been published before in an English translation. * 55*s net*

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LETTERS

God & the Theologians

IN REGARD to Mr. Alasdair MacIntyre's article "God and the Theologians" [September], I find it quite extraordinary that ordinary people should take seriously the opinions of these thinkers from Germany—a country noted historically for the silly over-elaboration of its cathedrals; and also, alas, for its evil ways.

C. E. MARTINI

New Hope,
Pennsylvania

"Suicide of a Nation?"

AS WITH INDIVIDUALS, so with countries: complacency is a barrier to progress. We may feel uncomfortable at constant criticisms and resent constant critics, but they certainly make us realise that what we accept is often second best and that sometimes what we know to be the best is not the unattainable ideal we had imagined but a real possibility. In so far, therefore, as the Koestler issue of ENCOUNTER makes us think again about things we do not always want to think about, it is to be praised; it is a pity that the standard of the articles is so varied.

My chief complaint is that they are too full of generalisations. But is this surprising? Granted the contributor's firm belief that England is divided into a large number of small groups with too little contact between them, it follows that each group has very little idea how others really work and think. It is not merely that retired colonels do not know about trade unionists, or shopkeepers about dons; even those of us who are trained to observe differences are cut off from those whose upbringing and profession are slightly different. What do most dons and journalists know about Civil Servants and businessmen? The sort of criticisms we need are not long strings of understandable but banal generalisations but the sad concrete facts. They are to be found, after all, in such works as the first chapters of Kitzinger's book on *Britain and the Common Market.*

Much of the thought is not constructive, even when it "implies" remedies; it is just an anguished cry of protest at our inability to control our surroundings and to influence the attitudes of other people as much as we would like. The "State-of-England" articles are the equivalent of Aldermaston marches with people who could not bear to be as "irresponsible" as CND. I think we all get this feeling of frustration that England can no longer impose her will on the outside world and that there is so little room for manoeuvre in home policies. Much of the implication of these essays is that all would be well if only someone would act from the top and stop us stagnating and feeling complacent. Things might be better but the mass of us would still be muddled. We do not consciously reject change and choose stagnation, we do not really make a cult of inefficiency, we just cannot decide what must be got rid of and what is worth holding on to. Above all, we cannot decide what aspects of our present society are irreconcilable. Granted that many features of our present society are incompatible with each other and with progress, half of us cannot see which exactly these are, and the other half cannot decide which to sacrifice for which. After all, there is more to be said for and more against this age than any other. I confess I simply find the situation and the choice less clearcut than do the contributors to this issue.

JOHN RODGERS, *M.P. (Cons.)*
House of Commons

Computers

"JOKES about computers, originally a feature of the *New Yorker*, now appear in much more mundane papers.... The trend is shown by two jokes: in the first, the computer simply prints out *'Cogito, ergo sum.'* More recently, the story goes, the Vatican's computer was fed all the information in the works of St. Thomas Aquinas. When all had been absorbed, it was asked: 'Is there a God?' After only a moment's consideration, it replied: 'There is now.'" (ENCOUNTER, November, 1963: *The Age of the Androids* by G. Rattray Taylor.)

ENCOUNTER has no special interest in science fiction; but it does have a special interest in conscientious and imaginative writers, whether of science fiction or anything else. It's therefore perhaps worth pointing out that the two vulgarised anecdotes given above are from very well-known short stories by Professor Isaac Asimov and Mr. Fredric Brown. If these anecdotes have in fact been reproduced in "more mundane papers" it's to be hoped that the subsequent actions for plagiarism will be as successful as they deserve to be. If not, then in spite of all the interest of Mr. Rattray Taylor's article, one wishes he had given due credit to the providers of his prolegomenary chitchat.

EDMUND CRISPIN

Totnes, Devon

Sterile? Illiberal?

THE making of clichés is one of the functions of the lazy but communicative mind which reaches, without discrimination, for the expected adjective. The first geographer to observe that the Timor Sea was shark-infested was stating a true and interesting fact, and the commentators of a decade and more ago who noticed that McCarthy's anti-Communism was entirely negative or sterile added to our political enlightenment. But now the cliché has congealed, like yesterday's gravy, and almost invariably turns up in any compendium of semi-fashionable *idées reçues*. I waited for it in Colin MacInnes's and clunk! there it was—sterile anti-Communism.

It would be interesting to know why it is more "sterile" to point out the evils and dangers of Communism than to write, yet again and with all the originality of a pop song, about The Monarchy, The

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Disappearance of the Empire, The Security Business, and The English Class System. Is it just that to dislike something is now evidence of sterility? If so, is the anti-*Apartheid* movement sterile? But perhaps, since Mr. MacInnes is prepared happily to chew his way through almost the whole menu of current twice-baked prejudices, he also accepts the mysterious belief that a dislike of Communism is somehow "illiberal."

CONSTANTINE FITZGIBBON

Waterston Manor,
Dorchester

South Africa: Other Views

JOHN MANDER'S article "South Africa: Revolution or Partition" [ENCOUNTER, October], puts with insight, and perhaps for the first time fully in Britain, the view that there will be a partition of South Africa.

His article is timely; for nowadays wherever there is concern for South Africa, and especially in Washington, London, and inside South Africa, more and more white people are talking partition. John Mander does not like the idea of partition, but "thinks it likely to happen." I think that it will not happen, for reasons which will appear.

His arguments for this view are straightforward: "sooner or later the irresistible force of black nationalism will meet with an irremovable object: Afrikaner nationalism." After fitting various jigsaw pieces together, pieces with names such as "outside intervention," "guerrilla warfare," "sanctions," "Afrikaner mentality," and so forth, he predicts that the end result of it all will be "a policy of strategic withdrawal—acquiescing in permanent black control in parts of South West Africa and the Transvaal, in Bechuanaland, and conceivably in a South-East-African Bantustan that included the High Commission Territories." And "there is no doubt that this is the direction in which Dr. Verwoerd and his advisers are now moving." Nevertheless he had to record that he "met no African who was even willing to look at the partition plan."

My principal difference with his view is that I do not believe that Afrikaner nationalism is "an irremovable object." To "underestimate the Boer" is no doubt a great mistake, and one which used to be made frequently. But another mistake is becoming increasingly fashionable: to exaggerate the toughness of the Afrikaner-led white supremacists of South Africa, and to concentrate on their internal politics to the exclusion of more important politics. In an African context the economic and military power of Afrikanerdom may be impressive: but in a world context it is peanuts.

The *apartheid* fortress can be breached by a concert of internal and external forces, a concert which is coming within the reach of the anti-*apartheid* leaders. But when such a concert has breached the outer walls, there are no internal lines, military, racial or historic, which will have the strength to stem the inrush of freedom. Partition is thus unlikely to *follow* the defeat of *apartheid*, an argument that I will return to later. But partition is even less likely to *precede* defeat, for in the present phase it is not politically possible for Dr. Verwoerd to offer partition. If he were to try to offer partition his own followers would desert him.

OF COURSE, IF TO-DAY Dr. Verwoerd were able to offer a just partition, there would be many Africans who might be tempted to accept. But a just partition would mean giving the whites only 19% of the assets of the country, for that is their proportion in the total population. Plans that propose giving the whites more are based on the fact that the whites developed the country. There is truth here, but there is also truth in the view that in terms of actual effort and sacrifice the Africans have put no less into the kitty, man for man, than have the whites. There is, admittedly, the stereotyped picture of the hard-working white driving the lazy black to work harder. But there is another stereotype: the lazy, comfort-loving boss, sitting on his *stoep* in the cool shade, while his black farm labourers bear the heat and burden of the day out in the lands. No one except the keeper of the book of Karma could possibly judge which of these two pictures is nearer to the truth, and whether black or white have given more to build our common fatherland and its economy. In the absence of such an assessment the fair-minded will have to deny any claim based on superior merit.

Even a 19–81% division, strictly speaking, would be unfair to the Africans. A hundred years ago South Africa was already partitioned. There were black kingdoms and areas of white rule. This natural partition was undone at the instance of the whites, by conquest. After South Africa was unified by the whites, the blacks helped build a common economy and a common state. The clear implications of the nineteenth-century settlement were that if the black man toiled to help the white man build South Africa, then the black man would one day enter into his rights, and enjoy the common fruits on a basis of equality, for such has been the law of partnerships since the world began. But, according to Mr. Mander, after a hundred years of this partnership, the whites wish to break it up. If it is the whites who have changed their minds, surely it is fair for them to take less than the 19% of the assets to which they might otherwise be entitled?

Nevertheless the Africans, with their traditional generosity and forgivingness, might well agree on the 19–81% partition, to avoid troubles.

Such a line might run approximately north from Humansdorp to the Orange River. Cape Town would be "white" (or rather "non-Bantu," for even in the west the whites are outnumbered, in

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the area by the "coloured people"). All the other major cities would be "black." Can Dr. Verwoerd offer such a line? Of course not. Great as his support may be among the whites, his own followers would chase him back to Holland if he were to make such an offer.

They would chase him nearly all the way there if he were merely to offer the line envisaged by Mr. Mander. This line would run along the Drakensberg, giving the Africans Natal and the Transkei, and leaving all the rest with the whites.[1]

If the "Mander line" were offered, Dr. Verwoerd would face a revolt inside his National Party, and would meet tremendous opposition from the whites generally. For not only have whites shown extreme reluctance to give up to Africans the land "won by the blood of our forefathers from the kaffirs," but they would refuse to hand over to the forces of freedom a great port and the country's second biggest industrial area. They would say, and with justice: "If African nationalists get Durban and Natal, they will import arms, with which to win back the rest of the country." And this latter argument means that the Mander line is less and less likely to be offered, as the situation gets tougher.

Put another way, Dr. Verwoerd is unable to offer partition because the whites have finally and irrevocably lost the initiative. The Africans hold the initiative because we have shifted the struggle from the political to the military-political field. In response to this shift the whites are arming, and both sides now expect war, when the Africans are able to get organised. The approaching armed clash dominates the thinking of both sides. It has already made pre-conflict partition unlikely, and of decreasing probability as time passes.

IF, THEN, NO PARTITION is conceivable before the conflict, perhaps partition might come as a result of mutual exhaustion after a conflict? Four years ago I held this view, but no longer do so.

The difference lies in the successful preparations for war made during the post-Sharpeville era by the South African government. Sharpeville showed how eggshell-thin were the defences, how badly prepared the South African Defence Force and police were. But that lesson has been understood by Dr. Verwoerd, and his forces are a good deal stronger to-day. Greater force will therefore be necessary for the defeat of *apartheid*, so great that once the outer defences are broken through no internal line will suffice to stop the avalanche.

Adequate force is likely to be available for the offensive. *Apartheid* is now a burning world issue, and it now seems likely that the South African war of liberation, when it begins, will move the world as deeply as did the Spanish civil war of the 'thirties. War against *apartheid* would attract volunteers and money from all round the world, for all people of colour are affected by the claim built into the South African constitution that whites are superior to non-whites. It should be remembered that along with the Africans, people of Indian and Chinese origin are oppressed in South Africa. Billions of people are thus likely to see their own fight in ours, just as in the 'thirties working men everywhere saw theirs in the fight put up by the Spanish Republicans.

Not only is the future liberation army likely to get the help of international brigades from many lands: it will also probably be able to trigger massive intervention by the United Nations. Two issues seem likely to draw in a peace-keeping operation: the question of the mandate of South West Africa, in which protracted negotiations and litigation seem about to produce a decision which will require enforcement, and the actions of the liberation army.

Intervention on either issue is likely to enjoy the support of both the United States and the Soviet Union, for, as the Soviet Union learnt to its cost in the Congo, a boycott of a massively-backed United Nations operation by either of the two super-powers merely leaves the field open to the influence of the other. But a combination of a great majority of the member-states and the two super-powers is an irresistible combination, as was shown at Suez in 1956.

Such a combination could not be exhausted by the strongest resistance that *apartheid* could mount. Partition is therefore unlikely to be caused by a military stalemate. Nor is partition likely to suit the interests or desires of any of the members of the combination. Nor, during this transition period, is partition likely to be imposed by reason of its justice, for there is not one magisterial district in the whole of South Africa in which the whites outnumber the non-whites.

TO SUMMARISE, partition of South Africa is unlikely because no one with power wants, or is likely to want it. To-day the whites have all the power, but they are doing nothing to achieve partition. It is true that Mr. P. J. Cillié, editor of *Die Burger*, put forward to John Mander a plan for partition. But Dr. Verwoerd himself, speaking of this very plan, said: "That is sheer foolishness." It is true that at lower levels government spokesmen hint that Dr. Verwoerd is thinking in terms of a radical partition, but such talk is aimed mostly at sympathetic Britons and Americans in an attempt to draw the teeth of western opposition to *apartheid*.

Tomorrow the whites will lose their monopoly of power. During the transition period partition is unlikely because it will not suit the military and political forces that are likely to be called into South Africa to break the *apartheid* régime.

And after the transition period partition is unlikely because at that time power will be vested in the majority. John Mander has admitted that no Africans want partition now, and I can see no factors on the horizon likely to change this view in the future.

Nevertheless John Mander's article is to be welcomed. Partition is a desperate measure. The fact

[1] Incidentally the Orange Free State is *not* an "area where there has never in fact been permanent Bantu settlement." The Sotho-Tswana people lived there long before the whites landed at Cape Town, and are still living there. Mr. Mander should beware of South African government propaganda especially when it says: "We got there first," a claim that is as untrue as it is irrelevant.

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Southport

A STONE'S THROW *along the flower-decked promenade from the Floral Hall here, at which more than a thousand delegates met for the annual conference of the Association of Municipal Corporations today, huge notices outside the Casino Theatre advertised: "Nightly bingo."*

Undeterred, and with no deliberate disrespect to their host resort, the delegates spent a large part of the day pondering if councils are spending too much on cultivation and not enough on culture, and condemning a society which apparently prefers bingo to Beethoven.

THE GUARDIAN

London

PRIME MINISTER *Macmillan talked about the suggestion that his Administration has created a simply affluent, prodigal, and unprincipled society. "I am accused of having created a Bingo Age.... What does this mean? In my constituency, or in any other constituency, it means that some elderly women get together and play bingo. But elderly women have always got together and played bridge. They enjoy it, and it's a way of getting together for a gossip. Bridge—in the old days only a few women could afford to play bridge, and now a lot can afford to play bingo. No doubt it would be better if they read Plato, but I can't see that it's so terribly wicked...."*

DAILY EXPRESS

London

THE ANCIENT *hymns will get a modern look in a new Anglican hymnbook which the Church Book Room Press is publishing. In the revision process, which has been carried out on the literary side by a committee presided over by the Vicar of Christ Church, Orpington, Kent, there are many notable casualties among the favourite hymns of the last* 100 *years.*

It will occasion no surprise that the third verse of "All Things Bright and Beautiful" has been dropped although the remainder of Mrs. C. F. Alexander's children's hymn is retained. The words, so redolent of a feudal age:

The rich man in his castle, the poor man at his gate,
God made them, high or lowly, and order'd their estate,

would not be advanced by the most reactionary teacher today.

Some of the hymns seem quite outrageous to the modern Asian Christian. The old favourite, "From Greenland's icy mountains" contains a reference to Ceylon, "though every prospect pleases and only man is vile": a distinction which is quite unacceptable today.

THE TIMES

Manchester

LORD OGMORE, *the President-elect of the Liberal Party, wrote in a letter published on Tuesday: "We believe that a materialistic, selfish, godless, pleasure-loving outlook has been encouraged and that this has sown a crop of bitter weeds whose harvest the country now reaps."*

We regret that the words "bitter weeds" erroneously appeared as "better seeds."

THE GUARDIAN

SIR, *The writer of your article on "old" (i.e. Victorian) hymns mentions the reference to Ceylon, where "only man is vile," but omits to note that in Bishop Heber's alternative version, adopted for metrical reasons by the English Hymnal, "Ceylon" is replaced by "Java."*

THE TIMES

Peking

THE PRIME MINISTER, *Kim Il-Sung, possibly does not want to connect North Korea unreservedly to either the Chinese or the Russian side. The Russians, however, must have noted President Choe Yonk-kon's Freudian slip as he was rounding off his speech during a State visit to China, at a rally in Peking. Speaking in Korean, the President said that the Korean people "under the leadership of your party" (the interpreter hesitated, but translated what he had said) would go forward with the Chinese people "sharing life, death, and adversity." Peking radio in its Russian service later accommodatingly reported Mr. Choe as saying "the" party, and substituted "joy" for "death."*

THE ECONOMIST

Washington

SENATOR *Goldwater has organised a brains trust of his own, composed of university and political types, to question and sharpen his thinking. He has hired an electronic computer to record everything he has said on such topics as Cuba and taxation, so that, when questioned, he will know what he has said in the past.*

NEW YORK TIMES

Paris

AGAINST ALL TRADITION, *M. Henri de Montherlant, the author and dramatist, was to-day received in the strictest privacy as a member of the Académie Française. After three years an unusual quarrel was thereby resolved. At the time of his election in 1960 to the chair of André Siegfried, M. de Montherlant caused a stir by announcing that he had expressed no desire to join the illustrious company of the "immortals" and certainly did not intend complying with the traditional pomp and splendour of the reception.*

He finally agreed to be received to-day on condition, apparently on grounds of health, that the ceremony should be held in private. So to-day there were no swords, no roll of drums, no green costumes, and no polite society onlookers, and the addresses were read in the ordinary conference room.

THE TIMES

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that he has treated it so seriously may awaken South Africa's white supremacists to the gravity of our crisis. If it does so this article may help them to find their way back to normality out of the terrible labyrinth into which history has led them.

London PATRICK DUNCAN

The Rule of the English

IT CERTAINLY makes an English-speaking South African wince to hear himself described as a betrayer of his British "liberal" heritage by a British writer, John Mander, half a century after the House of Commons passed the South Africa Act practically unchanged in spite of vehement protests from the most liberal and politically experienced group in the old Cape. Not long before he died in that same year, 1909, the elder J. H. Hofmeyr, the wisest Afrikaner national leader ever to arise, warned against the proposal for a uniracial Parliament and a pretty nearly uniracial franchise:

> "It would be a bad day for (the new South African Union) if, in addition to protecting our Northern Frontiers against the teeming hordes of Darkest Africa, we had continually to be on guard against a malcontent Coloured and Native population in our midst, outnumbering us by five or six to one. . . ."

But, on the last occasion when Britain could have done something effective about the direction of South Africa's politics, the only heritage she handed down to the country's homespun liberals was one of distracted indifference, if not outright betrayal. In addition, this original sin of omission left those South Africans of British stock and/or tradition at a permanent and increasing political disadvantage, whether they were liberals or not.

This disadvantage of the English-speaking section and the liberals (the two are not synonymous) is noted by Mr. Mander, but he tends not to focus on its complement. In a 99-per cent white electorate, Afrikaner numerical superiority, coupled with loading in favour of rural constituencies, made the appeal to and exploitation of Afrikaner group feeling the easiest and most obvious road to power in South Africa. Thus the real legacy left us as British power expired in South Africa is Afrikaner nationalism at its most exclusive and dominant. It is no use complaining to-day that the "ungrateful" Afrikaners abused Britain's "generous" assumption that they would play fair. Groups and nations are not sportsmen. It is also no liberal principle to indulge in trust, or to put people of whatever colour totally at the mercy of their old or recent enemies. Certainly when the long-expected appears to be happening there is little point in castigating a group for betraying a "heritage" it was never left in any position to use.

No doubt being continually, almost inevitably, on the losing side for forty years has not made the English-speaking voter an attractive and open-hearted fellow. While the Afrikaner has become ever more resolutely Afrikaans, even exhibitionistly so, the English have tended to subdue their descent in favour of being South African. Quite the reverse of being apathetic, the English-speaking voter has become a very political animal indeed, evasive, tactical, tending to skirt support for ideals which would bring the Afrikaner together in greater numbers against him than need be. This has brought the English section brief periods of political power, periods in which some of the more enlightened race-legislation was put on the statute-book, South Africa was taken into the war against Nazism, and the only avowedly liberal minister since 1910 was kept in office for nearly a decade. Behind his evasions he has assisted in the growth of university, press, and church institutions in which there is more liberal thinking than ever before. And all three Opposition parties stand for a multi-racial parliament—something previously unheard of in S.A. politics.

Mr. Cillié of *Die Burger*, who is *apartheid*'s most accomplished and fertile virtuoso, has certainly produced a neat political theorem about "benders" and "breakers;" an English section of settlers or colonials who will always ultimately "bend," and the Afrikaners with the characteristics of a nation, which can only ultimately "break." I would find this idea of his more intrinsically impressive if all the embittered settlers and colonials now reaching our shores in increasing numbers from the north did not immediately rush over to the Nationalist Party as a home from home. Also, the Natalians, traditionally the most "colonial" (see Roy Campbell) of the English group, are the first to show noticeable signs of wanting to go over in some numbers to Dr. Verwoerd's *laager* of band-wagons. Yet I see no historical evidence, in spite of much "tough, unyielding Boer" propaganda, that the Afrikaners, given the emotional chance, are any less able to adapt themselves to new social circumstances than any other comparable human group. However there is some validity in Mr. Cillié's idea. The Afrikaners have, in fact, formed the old-fashioned sort of nation that Africans are now so belatedly, desperately, and perhaps mistakenly trying to develop all over post-colonial Africa. Nevertheless, one of the reasons why South Africa has not gone towards the one-party state as fast as the rest of the African continent in search of this primary nationhood, is because the English section has grown past it.

THE ENGLISH SECTION has, almost without knowing it, become involved in a new grouping. It is a society whose centre is the United States but girdles the world from Hudson Bay, running across the Cape, round the antipodes, and back to San Francisco. This society consists of the new marginal men of the evolving one world, the rough seam of history. It possesses a largely Anglo-Saxon background, the English language, much technical expertise, an iron ration of culture, and a prescription for civilisation. One of its main features is a steadily increasing absorptive capacity, a tendency to mix colours and cultures however crudely, and nearly all its component parts are involved, from Arkansas to New Zealand, in the world challenge to end race discrimination. Quite the most valiant part of the Afrikaner nationalist's struggle is to prevent the sections of this society in Johannesburg, Port Elizabeth, Durban, and Cape Town absorbing and

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de-nationalising Afrikaners in great numbers. Hence the tendency to rigidify all the normally wavering divisions of such a community with omnipresent notice-boards and race zones. Thus, too, we have an Afrikaans headmaster who canes his pupils for riding on multi-racial buses. There is the horrified outcry of Dutch Reformed Church dominies against Afrikaans youth going to multi-racial night-clubs. There is even Dr. Verwoerd's constant warning to the Church itself not to become infected with the all-embracing ideas of the World Council of Churches.

This unifying tendency has been a major part of the English tradition, despite much talk of federations to-day, for the last 150 years in South Africa. While the Afrikaner tried, in the 19th century as to-day, to break up the country into a number of states, the English group continued inexorably bringing it together again with trade, missionary work, road engineering, railways, education, and mining, financial, and general business skills. This tendency has continued to strengthen and grow amongst the English group, so much so that an Afrikaner Government has spent the last fifteen years frantically passing one law after another to inhibit the full working of its influence. Still the economy is not to be denied and a million more Africans have been sucked into the "white" cities during the last ten years of apartheid. Of course Afrikaner nationalism has served to stress that the country is not merely one of the world's trading posts and cross-roads, and contributed a dynamic sense that it is a unique area of human relations with its own identity. African nationalism is equally powerfully making the point that this identity has more than one component and one colour, and that South Africa is, in fact, a racial Switzerland. But these two rudimentary nationalisms, carried to emotional extremes, are threatening eventually to reduce South Africa to an ash-heap of which Algeria is only a pale forewarning. This makes the English group's historical role the vital one to-day. To leave its bridging position in South African Affairs and join the old muzzle-loading nationalism in Dr. Verwoerd's *laager* would be as great a betrayal of that role as was Dr. Jameson's Raid in the opposite direction sixty years ago. There are no doubt many of the English-speaking group who want to, and indeed will, retreat among the conventional race-heroes of the Nationalist Party. But basically because it is a group in its own right and in its world connections, the essential part of this community will stay gropingly intact and preserve a kind of hazy integrity. And by doing this it will hold a way open into the future for South Africa.

ALREADY, PRAGMATIC MINDS are at work on a way past the confrontation of the two racial absolutes, Afrikaner and African domination. Mr. Mander quotes the radical partition idea, which, significantly enough, originated in the English-speaking quarter. If this plan does not demand complete white domination on one side of the Drakensberg and offers a multi-racial franchise on both sides, it could give the country maybe a generation to sort out its crazy mixture of feelings about race. It might even grow together again under the inevitable black majority rule, but a black majority no longer living in the atmosphere of racial chauvinism that dominates so much of African politics to-day. But it will certainly not be possible if Dr. Verwoerd tries to impose it by terrifying the English and Afrikaners together into one menacing bloc of Whites dictating it to the Blacks as the price for their total rejection from White society. Then it will only be seen as a last insolent bid to preserve White supremacy and maintain, at least, partial Black subjection. Such a solution could only be achieved by negotiation, though who negotiates with whom is a ticklish though not necessarily insoluble question. These negotiations are more likely to come about if the Whites are also represented by members of the more trusted English group, are seen to be present in their own right, and not merely as some nominees of the now deeply loathed Nationalist Government. It will also almost certainly need a world or at least a Western guarantee.

I cannot see the West guaranteeing or the Africans negotiating to leave a "rump" or Western South Africa as the world's last area for the free exercise of old-fashioned or "traditional" economic, social, and political race discrimination. Unless some sort of multi-racial franchise and parliaments at least open to all races are accepted as a *sine qua non* of the plan, we might as well go on our way to the ultimate slag-heap without further waste of breath or typewriter-ribbon on the proposal.

Capetown ANTHONY DELIUS

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AUTHORS

Ingeborg Bachmann, who was born in Klagenfurt, Austria, in 1926, and who did a dissertation in philosophy (on Martin Heidegger), has had several volumes of verse published in Germany (Piper Verlag). A volume of her short stories will be published early next year by André Deutsch (London) and Alfred Knopf (New York)....

Lord Gladwyn *writes:* "I was the first Chairman (in May, 1961) of the Campaign for the Common Market, which issued a manifesto in that month, signed by 150 prominent people in all walks of our national life, recommending that H.M.G. should apply for membership of the European Economic Community. After this application had been made, the Campaign for the Common Market played a considerable part in explaining the real issues to the nation, and in supporting the Government in the efforts it was making in order to achieve our membership on terms which would be consonant with our obligations to the Commonwealth, to our own farmers and to the members of the Free Trade Association....

"After General de Gaulle's Press Conference on 14th January last, I published an article in the *Daily Telegraph*, in which I drew attention to the fact that this veto had apparently been applied because the General preferred the conception of a 'Carolingian Empire' to a Western Alliance based on a partnership between America and a united Europe including the U.K., and that the former concept should be resolutely opposed by all those who had the interests of the Alliance at heart. Subsequently, in speeches at Brussels, Frankfurt-am-Main and, finally, in Paris (on May 11 last), I outlined my own plan for a 'European Political Union' and urged that the right reply to General de Gaulle's bid for a Western Europe based on the hegemony of France, was to make it entirely clear that the U.K., for her part, was prepared to accept definite political obligations of a European character, provided they were accepted by France as well....

"*Le Plan Gladwyn*, as it was dubbed by the French press, subsequently had considerable success on the Continent of Europe and many friends of Britain there feel that, in the absence of some support for it in the U.K., there is a grave danger of the success of the Gaullist propaganda to the effect that Britain has now lost all interest in Europe and is rapidly getting nearer and nearer to America.

"I would be the first to admit that, in practice, little can be done to counter this impression before the General Election in this country, but I hope and believe that we will be successful in keeping the European flag flying in this country and that, after the Election—whichever side wins—the climate will be such as to make possible some discussion of a political association between this country and the mainland of Europe...."

Katharine Whitehorn is the well-known young London journalist, formerly a columnist on the *Spectator* now on the staff of the *Observer*....

Patrick Duncan is a member of the Pan-Africanist Congress of South Africa. The son of a former Governor-General of South Africa, he was at one time editor of *Contact*, a South African liberal fortnightly. He now lives, "impermanently," in London....

Anthony Delius is the political correspondent of the *Cape Times*: he was recently banned from the precincts of Parliament for a year for his irreverent comment on Dr. Verwoerd's Government. His latest book, *The Day Natal Took Off*, has recently been published here by Pall Mall Press....

Richard Ellmann is Professor of English at Northwestern University, Illinois. His books include *The Identity of Yeats* and a biography of James Joyce; he is at present in England for a year, editing Joyce's letters for publication next year by Faber and Viking Press, and working on a book on Oscar Wilde as a late Romantic....

On the cover (design by Colin Banks and John Miles)—from left to right: Edmund Wilson, Max Beerbohm, Leon Trotsky, and W. H. Auden....

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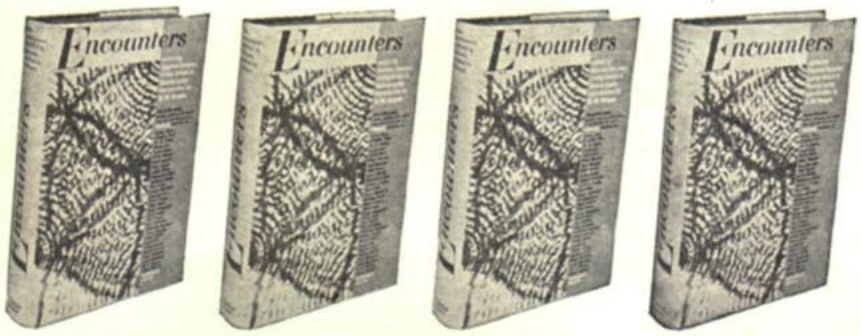
ENCOUNTERS

an anthology from the first ten years of *Encounter* edited by Stephen Spender, Irving Kristol, and Melvin J. Lasky with an introduction by D. W. Brogan.

Here is a magnificent anthology which every reader of *Encounter* will wish to possess. To celebrate the magazine's first ten years the editors have brought together some of the most famous contributions – e.g. Nancy Mitford on the English Aristocracy, Wayland Young on Prostitution, H. R. Trevor-Roper's critique of Arnold Toynbee – many of which are unobtainable in the original



issues. The section headings themselves give some idea of the scope of this 600-page anthology: Persons & Places, Problems & Polemics, Arts & Letters, Men & Ideas, Stories, Poems. Inevitably some readers will regret the omission of their favourite contributor, but when those chosen include Mary McCarthy, Evelyn Waugh, Robert Graves, Nadine Gordimer, Cyril Connolly, C. P. Snow, Edmund Wilson, Isaiah Berlin, Lionel Trilling, Arthur Koestler, W. H. Auden, Thom Gunn, Philip Larkin and Kenneth Tynan (to mention only a few of the 52 contributors), there should be plenty to satisfy the most voracious intellectual appetite.

ENCOUNTERS is published by **Weidenfeld & Nicolson** in England at 42s; and in America by **Basic Books** at $8.50. It is available only through booksellers, with whom orders should be placed.

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JULIAN GLOAG

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